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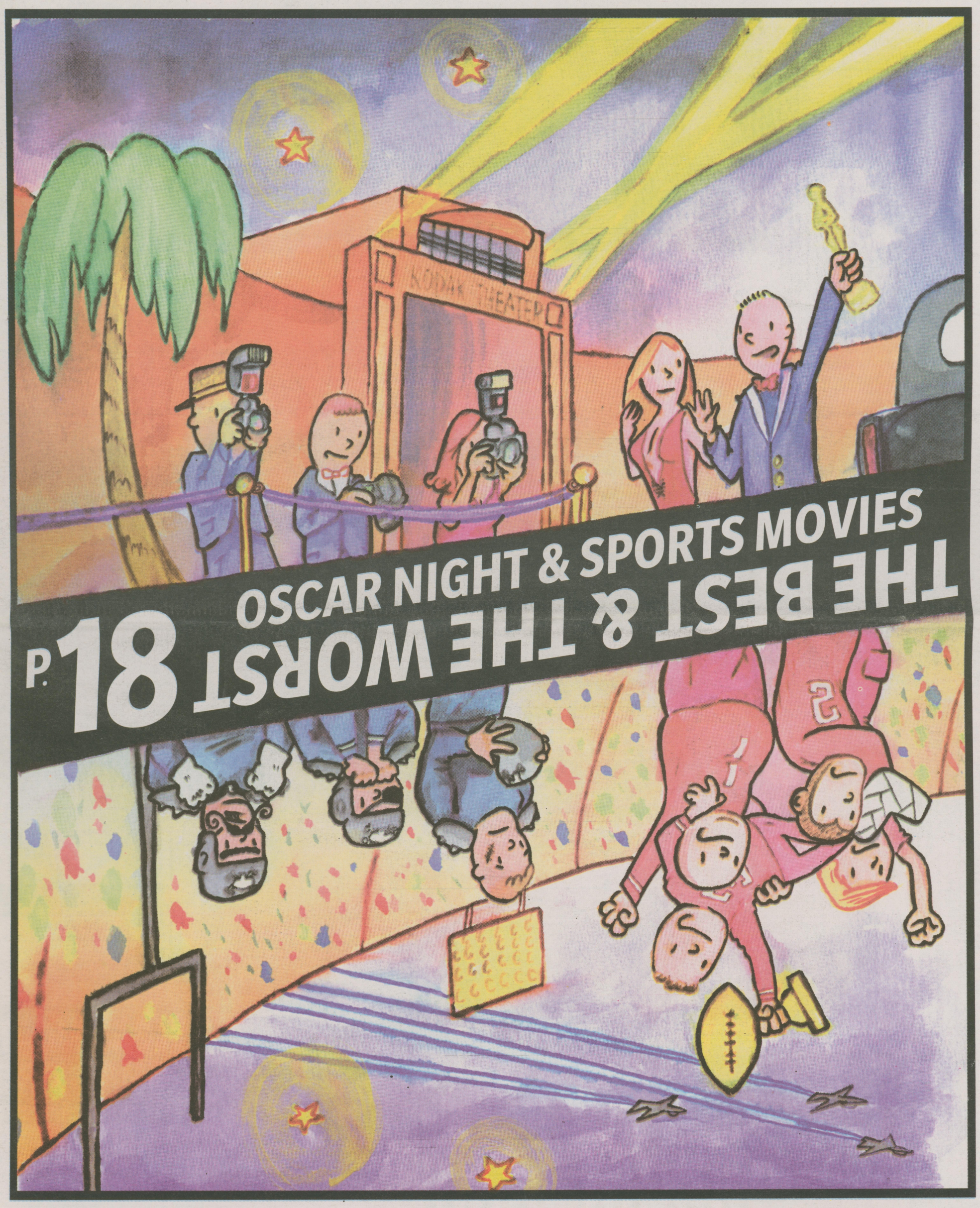

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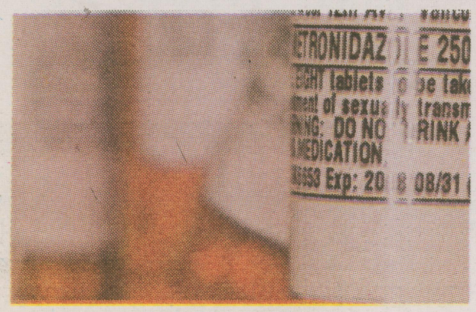

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Electoral debate exposes candidates

by Micah Luxen

MICAH LUXEN PHOTO

Tracy Ho and George Robinson have a friendly chat before butting heads at the 2007 UVSS chairperson electoral debate.

To an audience of approximately 30 students, chair candidates Tracy Ho and George Robinson presented their positions at the Feb. 26 *Martlet*-hosted 2007 UVSS chairperson electoral debate.

Running on the Team FAST campaign slate, Ho was up against slate A.C.T. Now hopeful George Robinson. The two candidates for chairperson began the hour-long debate with a platform statement and ended by answering questions raised by the audience.

Calling attention to the small percentage of the student population in attendance, *Martlet* editor Matthew Gauk questioned the candidates on how they intend to engage UVic students in campus politics if they are elected. The UVSS semi-annual meeting, held just before reading break, was used as an example for the question because it fell short when student attendance failed to meet quorum.

Ho suggested that students aren't necessarily indifferent to their university but need to be engaged personally in conversations with the students' society.

"The [UVSS] needs to go out and talk to the students to find out what is important to them, talk about how they can get involved to make a change, and talk about how they can come to the student society and make those ideas into a reality," said Ho.

Robinson retorted that "rather than harassing students, the UVSS should develop a series of programs that actually get students invested [in their university]. Not only that, but the UVSS should fund the clubs and course unions properly so they can do more activities and get people engaged in their campus."

Robinson has been engaged on campus for years, serving on both the university events committee and the UVic Senate. Ho is new to the university, although she has first-hand work experience with her previous students' society at Vancouver Community College. Her well-rounded experience and self-declared "sponge"-like ability to adapt to the new campus was no match, however, for Robinson's understanding of UVic. While Ho admitted she was not familiar with the recently released UVic Strategic Plan, Robinson said he himself took part in drafting the plan and then voted against the plan as a member of the UVic Senate.

Both candidates were enthusiastic about the improvements they believed they could make should they be elected as the new UVSS chairperson.

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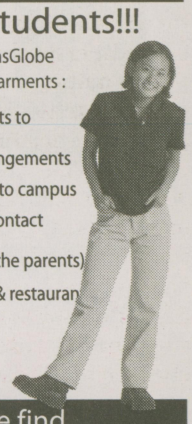

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Special meeting to make up for disappointing turnout

by Steven Masuch

The University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) will be holding a special general meeting to make up for the semi-annual general meeting, which failed to meet quorum on Feb. 15.

At a UVSS board of directors meeting on Feb. 26, the board passed a motion that called for a special general meeting to be held in March. Quorum in a general meeting of the UVSS is 0.6 per cent of the UVSS membership, or approximately 100 members. Since approximately 60 people attended and 100 were needed to make quorum, the minutes from the October annual general meeting were not approved and two special resolutions regarding the Women's Centre could not be passed.

Anna Planedin, the Women's Centre representative on the board of directors and author of the motion to hold another AGM, said that she felt very good about the motion passing.

"I'm really excited to round up more people," said Planedin.

Penny Beames, chairperson of the UVSS, said that the special general meeting would be advertised more than the SAGM. Advertising methods will include posters around campus, notices in the *Martlet*, mass e-mails and word-of-mouth advertising from the board members.

To give time for the agenda to be approved and to allow for proper notice, the earliest the meeting could be held is March 28.

Lack of attendance is a problem that has occurred at several UVSS general meetings over the last few years. Meetings held in 2002, 2003 and 2006 all failed to make quorum. After the meeting in 2006 failed to meet quorum, Beames said that all upcoming general meetings would be announced via e-mail.

No e-mail was sent out announcing the 2007 SAGM. When asked about this, Beames said it was an oversight by the entire board.

Some board members said that one reason for the low turnout and lack of quorum was the lack of SAGM advertising. Although notices of the meeting were printed in the *Martlet* two weeks before the event, there was an apparent lack of signs posted around the university campus.

The UVSS constitution says that at least 100 notices must be posted around campus at least two weeks in advance of general meetings in order to give proper notice. The UVSS order to UVic Grafix, requesting the notices to be printed and posted, specified only 75 notices. As of Feb. 27, no notices for the SAGM were posted on UVSS bulletin boards in the Clearihue, MacLaurin and Cornett buildings. However, some notices were posted on other billboards around campus. In addition, no notice of the SAGM was posted on the main UVSS website under the "Meeting Times" section, and no post regarding the SAGM was made on the official UVSS blog, which is a service meant "to get the word out online about events," according to the UVSS website.

At the board meeting on Monday, Beames said it was the responsibility of all the board members to advertise the SAGM. However, this duty was not clearly communicated to all of the board.

Planedin said that she had not been informed about SAGM advertising or her responsibilities toward it. "If I had known it was my responsibility then, when it was planned, I would have certainly advertised," said Planedin.

When asked whether advertising duties had not been clearly defined, Director-at-Large Maggi Gyuricska said, "I don't think that's even a matter of question, because it was never really discussed before."

Some directors said the low attendance was due to more than a lack of advertising and instead is due to a lack of student interest.

In an entry on his blog, Director of Academics Jeremy David Peters said "most stuents [sic] quite frankly don't care about student policits [sic]."

An informal survey conducted by the *Martlet* supported this view. Of over 50 UVic students, 79 per cent said they were not informed of the SAGM. Of those students, 63 per cent said they didn't care about not being informed. Eleven per cent said that they were not sure if they cared, and the remaining 26 per cent said that they did care.

"The sad thing is, I don't feel that the student body really wants to get involved. Half the board directors didn't show up to the SAGM," said Gyuricska. "If the board members aren't even going to show up, how do you expect the students to show up?"

"Quorum is traditionally only met when there is an issue on the floor that is of great interest to a large number of people," said Beams. "It's a perennial issue. It's always been like that."

UVSS moves on elections investigation

By Matthew Gauk

The University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) board of directors has finally made a little bit of headway on an independent investigation into last year's controversial election. This comes nearly four and a half months after the student body demanded they take action at this year's UVSS annual general meeting (AGM).

Two separate motions were put forward at the Feb. 26 board meeting to launch the investigation, which was "authorized" at the AGM. The board is now waiting for a cost estimate from the UVSS ombudsperson before continuing with a motion to make selections for a committee to find an appropriate investigator.

Last year's controversy arose when two chairperson candidates, one of whom is current chairperson Penny Beames, were disqualified for breaking campaign regulations. Beames was reinstated, and after several heated board meetings, eight director resignations and an attempt to file an injunction with the B.C. Supreme Court, she was declared the winner.

When asked last month about why no one from the board had launched the investigation, Beames indicated that as someone involved in the original controversy, it would be inappropriate for her to initiate it and that it was up to other members of the board to get the investigation going.

That's exactly what happened on Feb. 26. One motion proposed by Access UVic (the constituency group for students with a disability) representative and director-at-large Kyla Berry called for an inquiry into last year's election by lawyer Bruce Hallsor. An addendum to that motion stipulated that Hallsor, current president of Fair Voting BC and past Canadian Alliance candidate for Victoria, would also monitor this year's election. The motion died on the floor when it wasn't seconded. It was also brought up that Hallsor had represented two candidates in the past in lawsuits against the UVSS.

Director-at-large Andrew Bateman put a second motion forward. It stated that the board should select a member to work together with UVSS ombudsperson Martine Conway to find an appropriate candidate to run the external investigation. It also suggested a $1,000 price cap for the investigation, despite the fact that the very same price cap was voted down at the AGM in October.

Director-at-large Alex Chang attempted to amend the motion to get rid of the cap, but this was defeated, at which point he tried to raise the cap to $10,000, but this was defeated as well.

"We asked [the student body], 'do you want a cap?' and they clearly said no," said Chang. "It would be irresponsible for us to go against their wishes."

This sentiment was echoed by board members and by observers in the gallery.

"The membership wanted this to happen, and I think you're getting too caught up in the legal worrying of the motion," said Erica Virtue, a student running for director of services in the A.C.T. Now slate, who also pointed out that the board had only just voted in a motion to spend $13,000 on new blinds for the Michele Pujol room.

"If we can spend $9,000 on the [Day of Action], we can shell out a few dollars for the investigation," remarked director-at-large Janet Shivas.

Director-at-large Erin Sikora defended the price cap, characterizing her own comments on the price cap as "super unpopular." She acknowledged that the students at the AGM had the idea that "you can't put a price on fairness," but said that the board is elected to spend students' money and that they have to make sure their decisions are financially sound ones. Virtue responded to this and several other comments of a similar nature by pointing out that the authority of a UVSS general meeting is greater than the authority of the UVSS board.

The director of Access UVic, Rose Mariana Robb, said that while their group is eager to get along with the board, given the recent friction between the two groups, the members of Access "share a deep concern about the democratic process and the consequences for the students' society." The cloud of the last election is still hanging over the UVSS, even as it enters into this year's election period, said Robb, who added that as a member of the students' society, she wants to see the reputation of the UVSS restored.

With Berry's motion to launch an investigation under the auspices of Hallsor defeated and the amendments to the price cap defeated, the board decided that it would be prudent to get a cost estimate done before moving on. Bateman's motion to create a committee to find the right person to launch an investigation was tabled until the estimate was available.

The next board meeting is on March 12 in the Michele Pujol room.

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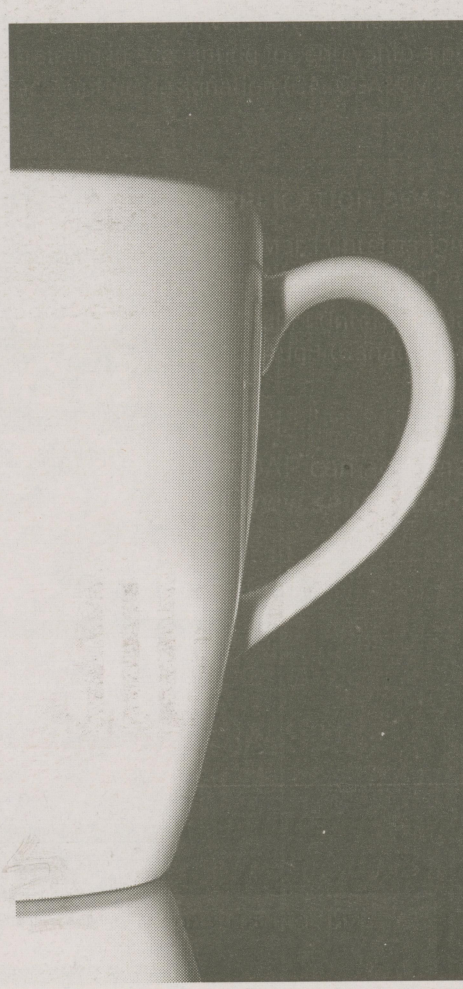

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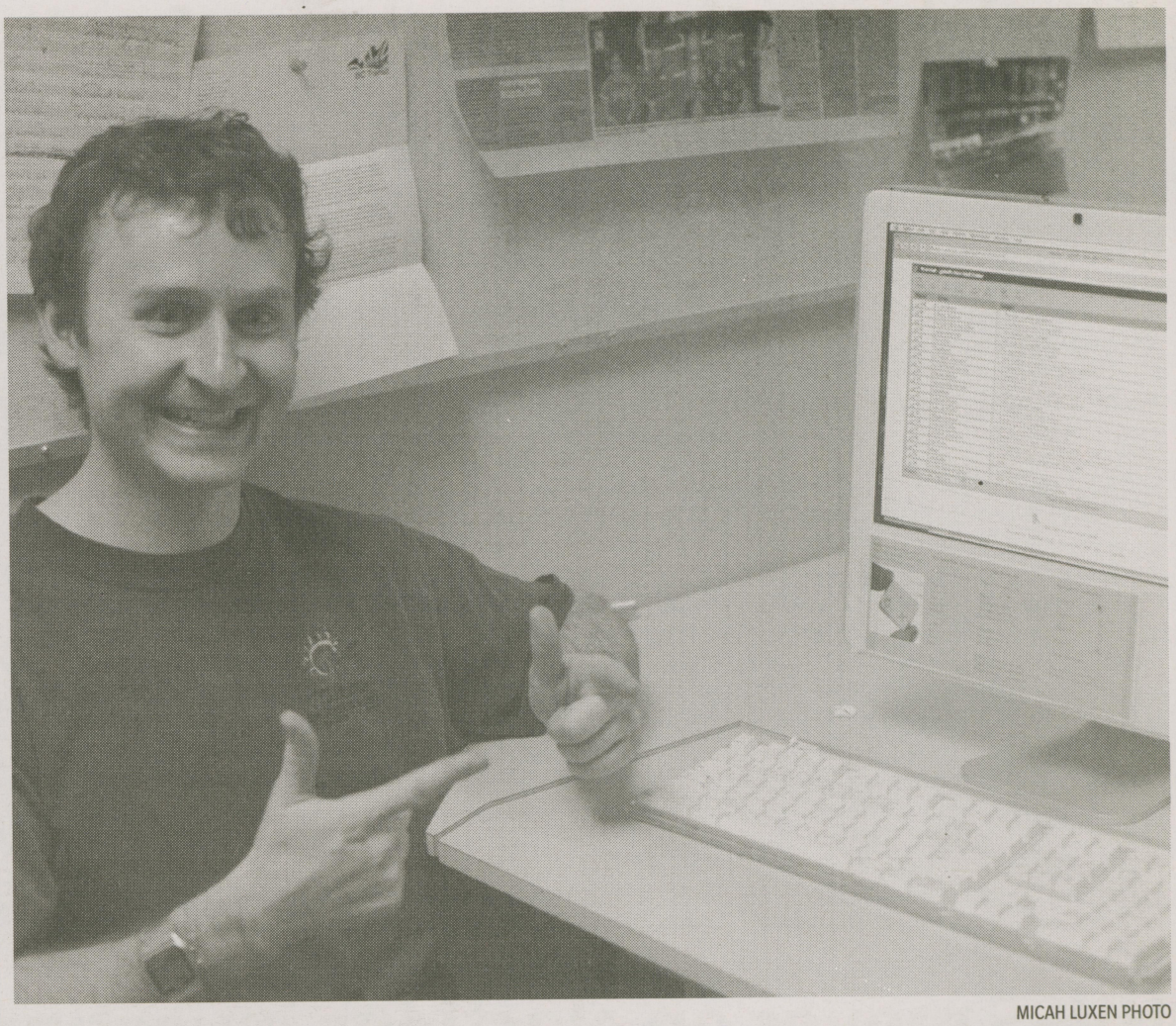

MICAH LUXEN PHOTO

Gordon Duff, an electrical engineering student, thinks the Internet is really going to take off.

Internet neutrality at risk

by Bryan Linge

The Internet as we know it is in jeopardy, and the threat comes from politicians like Industry Canada Minister Maxime Bernier, who seem to favour economic competition between Internet service providers over a neutral Net.

Industry Canada is considering changes to the telecommunication laws that govern the Internet.

At present, when a user requests information from a site, all information is treated equally by the infrastructure of the Internet—the broadband network owned by the Internet service providers (ISPs).

Unless legislation is introduced to keep the Internet neutral, the major ISPs, such as Telus and Shaw, could throttle bandwidth or even block access to sites they dislike or that offer services competing with their own products.

Presently, the only Canadian legislation dealing with the issue is Section 27(2) in the Telecommunications Act, which states that no "unjust discrimination" can occur in the provision of Internet access.

The United States has also been embroiled in this debate. U.S. Congress has debated "Net Neutrality" legislation, and though no laws regarding it have been passed, an anti-neutrality law was defeated and conditions were imposed on a recent merger between AT&T and Bell by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). The conditions stated that they couldn't "provide or sell Internet content ... that privileges, degrades or prioritizes any packet transmitted over AT&T/Bell's broadband Internet access service based on its source, ownership or destination."

If Internet access is to be neutral, regulation laws are needed. Already, there have been instances where ISPs have prioritized their own interests and services at the expense of consumers and the public. During the 2005 strike by Telus workers, Telus blocked access to a website supporting the striking workers, as well as all other sites that were hosted on the same server. At the same time that Shaw introduced their digital phone service, it also began offering a $10 Voice over Internet Protocol "quality of service enhancement" to customers on similar, but alternative services, and without this payment, customers might encounter "service issues with their Voice over Internet service."

Arthur Kroker, Canadian Research Chair in Technology and culture and a political science professor, is "not favourable whatsoever" to the idea of ISPs shaping Internet traffic.

Kroker says that aside from any sort of business competition and innovation, which would be stifled, the "nature of the Internet [which is] really about free speech" would be destroyed.

"This is a political debate on what will be the shape of the Internet in the future," said Professor Kroker. "On one [hand] you have telecommunications and broadband servers ... who want to reduce the Internet to the [state] of cable television. On the other hand, there is the Internet community, which is global, energetic [and] creative, and realizes this issue is about the fate of the Internet."

Both the Bloc Quebecois and the NDP are "absolutely committed" to Net neutrality. "One of the amazing things [about the Internet] is that it provides all of us with equal access" to everything, said Denise Savoie, NDP MP for Victoria and Oak Bay. Despite the ramification for the future of communication, said Jeff Silvester, a representative for Keith Martin, Liberal MP for Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca, "the general public is not aware of this issue."

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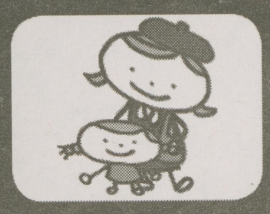

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ALEX ACHTEM PHOTO

Now that Canadians are required to carry passports to enter the United States, the line ups are long and the applications are slow.

Passport lineups leave Canadians waiting

by Megan Drysdale

Anyone who is looking to apply for a passport can expect to either stand in line for hours or wait nearly two months if they apply by mail, according to Passport Canada, and it doesn't look like the process will be speeding up any time soon.

Canadians travelling by air into the United States were required to carry a valid passport as of Jan. 23. By this time next year, Canadians will also be required to carry a passport to travel to the United States by land and sea.

Only six tellers are available at any given time at the passport office on Fort Street, resulting in lineups than can last up to 10 hours. Some have taken to camping out for the night or showing up in the early hours of the morning to get to the front of the line.

"We're a self-operating agency," said Francine Charbonneau, Passport Canada spokesperson. "We don't get money from the legislature. We just don't have the resources to open another office. Any money we make goes into the pot for new technology."

To deal with the demand, Passport Canada employees have been offered overtime, while some government workers have been pulled from retirement. Passport Canada hired 200 employees as of January, and another 300 are currently being cleared.

Every day, 21,000 new passport applications are submitted across Canada, an increase from 13,000 a day this time last year. Passport Canada expects that overall there will be a 15 per cent increase in business this year.

Passport Canada urges Canadians to mail in their applications or to apply at select Canada Post or Service Canada receiving agents.

"We encourage those who don't need their passport right away to mail in their application and save the lines for those who need it urgently," said Charbonneau.

Kayla Hart, a first-year UVic student, opted to stand in line for eight and a half hours rather than mailing in her application. "I didn't feel comfortable mailing in my birth certificate," she said, "and I heard rumours that [Passport Canada] is still opening applications from December."

Charbonneau confirmed that mail applications can take up to 45 business days to process. Those who apply in person can expect their passport within three weeks.

Hart, during her wait, witnessed two people sell their spots in line for $100 each. "There were homeless youth standing in line ... I had heard about it before," said Hart. "Someone sold their spot, which was third in line."

Wendy Stone, co-ordinator of the Community Casual Labour Pool, doesn't necessarily see this opportunity as a bad thing. Members of the labour pool, part of the Victoria Cool-Aid Society, include university students looking for casual work and people with disabilities who are unable to hold down consistent employment.

"The media spin that we employ strictly the homeless is not indicative of everyone," said Stone. "But it has got lots of attention. It's afforded us a lot of opportunities."

The organization doesn't advertise its services specifically for the passport lineups. As of Feb. 15, 18 people from the labour pool had been hired to stand in line for passports and were paid between $11-$13 an hour.

"We've gotten very positive feedback. The people I hear from are very happy," said Stone. "Some of our clients have included a 91-year-old woman who couldn't stand in line for any length of time, and parents with disabled children who couldn't take the time off to wait. This way they have to wait an hour rather than a whole day."

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B.C. budget tells an 'Inconsistent Truth'

Climate change makes a small dent in the provincial budget

by Anna Kemp

In last month's throne speech, Lieutenant Governor Iona Campagnolo promised a 33 per cent reduction in B.C.'s greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 and said that now is "a time for action" and not for debate or procrastination.

While environmental groups applauded the speech's bold commitments, last week's provincial budget has left many questioning whether the government is ready to act on climate change.

"The throne speech contains some fairly visionary statements, but the provincial budget doesn't reflect that," said Lisa Matthaus, a Sierra Club BC spokesperson. "It's what we are calling 'an inconsistent truth.'"

Matthaus called the $103 million allocated for environmental leadership "pretty underwhelming."

Although the government admits that immediate action on climate change is required, many of the initiatives in this budget, like spending for highway expansion projects and increased subsidies to oil and gas industries, are actually digging B.C. further into what Matthaus called a "carbon hole."

"And the first thing you should do when you find yourself in a hole is stop digging," she said.

Shane Simpson, the NDP's environment critic, agreed that the provincial budget shows little significant commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

"The funding is spread out over three years and covers a whole array of things, many of which don't have a lot to do with climate change," said Simpson.

Of the $103 million, $15 million is for parks upgrades and $2 million goes to environmental awards.

Simpson also points out that although $10 million is allocated for the purchase of hybrid vehicles for the provincial government fleet, $7 million of that was spent in the 2006-07 fiscal year. He also notes that the $45 million allocated for hydrogen-powered buses for the 2010 Olympics actually comes from federal coffers.

There is $14 million for air quality improvement measures aimed toward reducing air pollution, but only a $4-million one-time allocation for combating climate change.

The budget also includes some tax measures that promote energy efficiency in the home and support the use of hybrid cars and biodiesel- and propane-fuelled vehicles.

In the announcement of the provincial budget, Finance Minister Carol Taylor explained that funding for climate change initiatives will come after the newly-announced climate action team decides what steps will be taken to curb emissions. "We're approaching it in a way that is calm. We're determined, we're focused and we're disciplined. We are going to do this and we're going to fund it," Taylor said.

Simpson said that although the Liberals have offered no explanation for how they will achieve their goals and made no commitment to interim targets, they are asserting that this issue has been on the table for months.

"This was clearly cobbled together at the last minute," he said. "What would have been more honest would be to admit that climate change is a big issue that we haven't been addressing, but are ready to deal with right now."

Simpson suggested forming an open and transparent legislative committee whose discussions and results would all be placed on the public record. He is concerned about the lack of information that has been released about the BC Liberals' climate action team.

"We have no idea who will be on it, how they are going to work, what kind of timeline they will have," said Simpson.

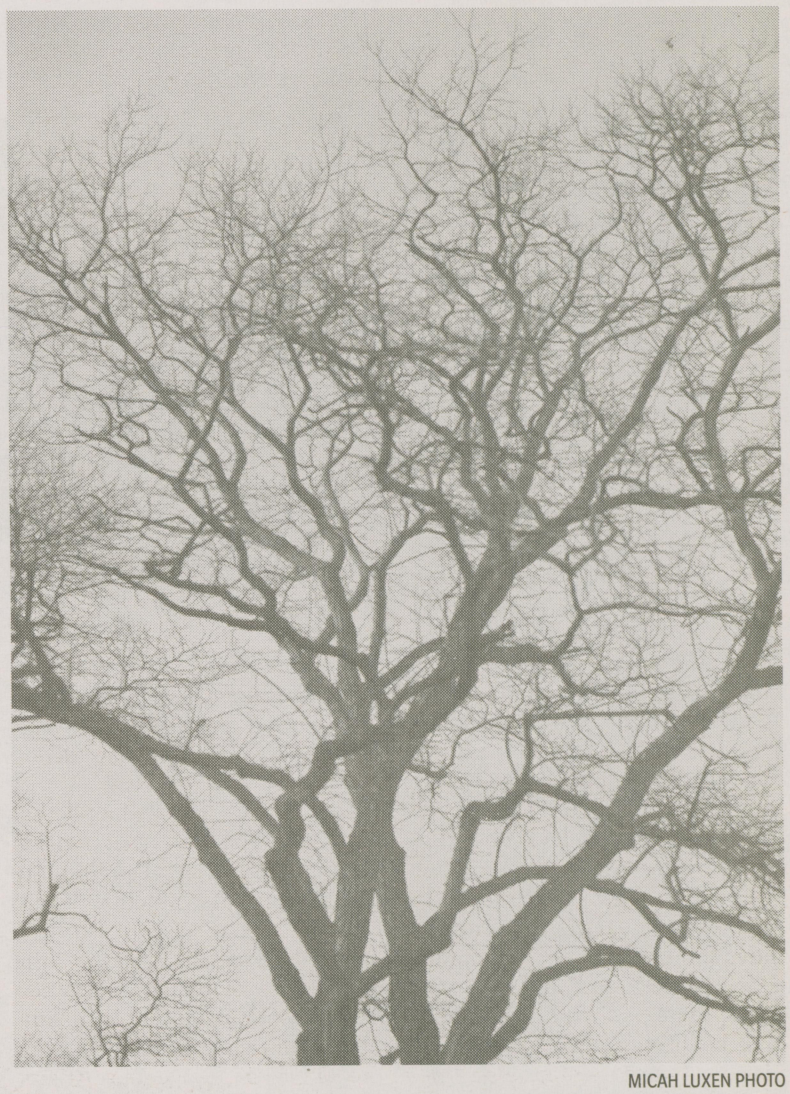
According to Edward Parson, a visiting professor at UVic's Centre for Global Studies, budget dollars are not the primary issue.

"You can't measure the seriousness of the government's commitment by how much is allocated in the budget," said Parson. "Most of the things that the government can do for climate change are regulatory, and the costs to the government of implementing and monitoring a regulatory program are actually very small."

"By putting a price on greenhouse gas emissions through carbon taxes, which for very foolish reasons keep getting pushed off the table, or tradable emission programs, well-designed regulatory programs make people consider emissions like they do other costs."

Parson said that many of the initiatives outlined in the budget are "pure symbol." He cited as example the $10 million allocated for hybrid cars for the government fleet. This will actually make no difference to greenhouse emissions because the supply of hybrid cars, is currently constrained, meaning that manufacturers can't keep up with demand. When the government purchases hybrid cars it only takes them away from someone else who wanted to buy them.

"Maybe this government is serious about combating climate change and maybe not, but money in their budget is not the measure," said Parson. "We will see how serious they are by whether they put meaningful regulations in place to motivate people to reduce greenhouse emissions."



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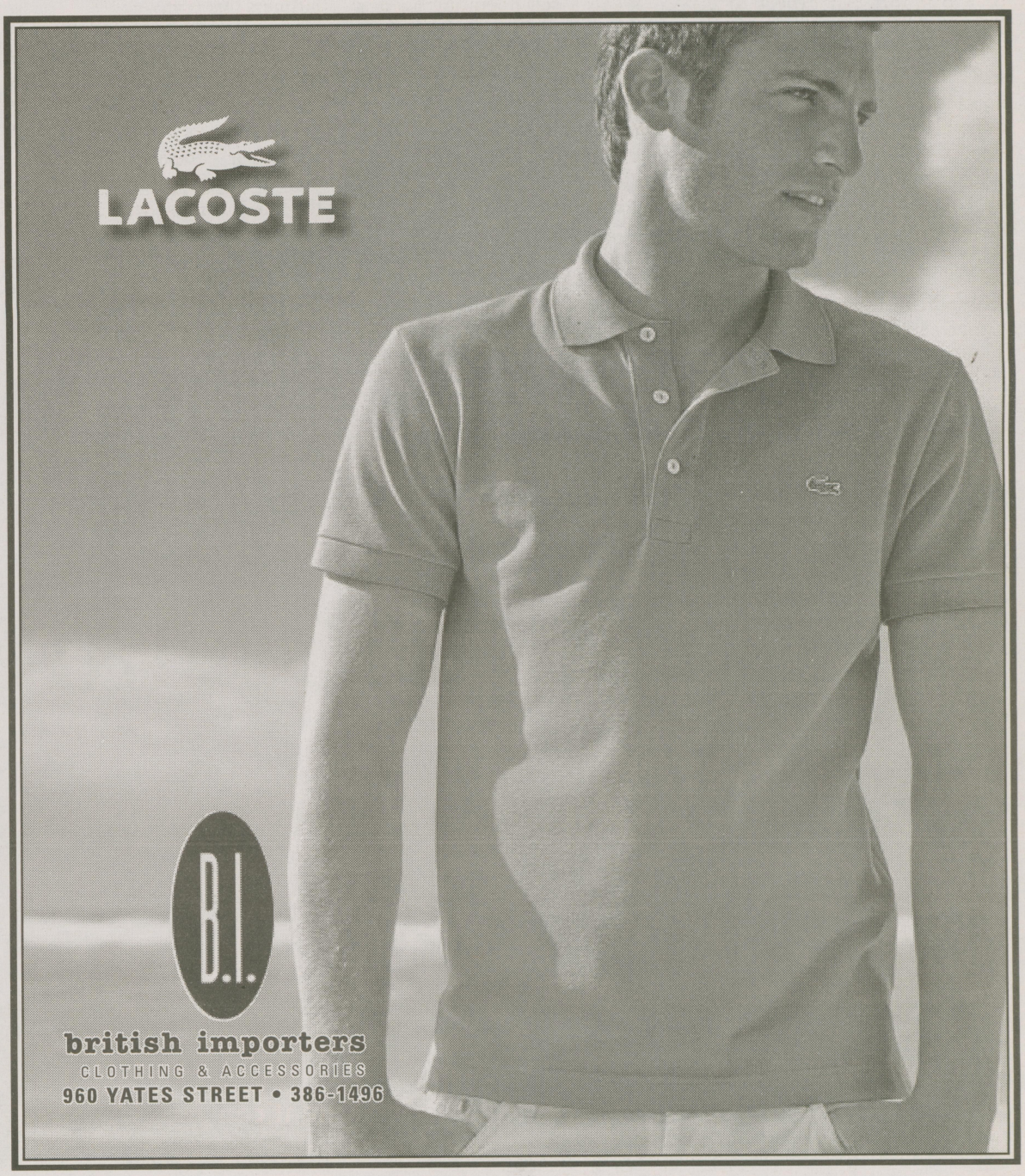

Frances Hunt-Jinnouchi, Office of Indigenous Affairs

by Vanessa Lundgren

"There's a lot more happening than meets the eye," said Frances Hunt-Jinnouchi, UVic's first director of the newly established Office of Indigenous Affairs, speaking of the role Indigenous students, faculty and community members are playing on-campus.

The development of this office significantly shows that "UVic's commitment is from the top-down," said Hunt-Jinnouchi. It will serve the approximately 600 "self-identified Aboriginal students" enrolled at UVic, a population that has been growing.

"Over the last 15 to 20 years, the numbers [of Aboriginal students] have increased although areas such as access and retention are always key areas that we need to be focused on," said Hunt-Jinnouchi. She added that a major goal of her office and other universities across Canada is to develop more "focused Aboriginal-specific graduate-level programs."

"We need to step back and look at ways of designing programs that are relevant, that are intimately linked to the Aboriginal communities ... longer-range community development plans," she said.

The Office of Indigenous Affairs has replaced the Aboriginal Liaison Office, which was created 13 years ago. According to Hunt-Jinnouchi, the new office has a "broader mandate" and it is "embedded more into the administrative structure of the university than a liaison position, and so it allows me to be involved in helping to direct and inform policies that effect Aboriginal students."

"As far as my understanding is, a position such as this is the first in the province—that it isn't just in an advisory capacity, so I think that's how we're unique," she said.

As director, Hunt-Jinnouchi will oversee such initiatives as enhancing the recruitment of Aboriginal students, their retention and academic success, the development and funding of curricula and methodologies supportive to Indigenous communities, as well as the construction of the First People's House, an Indigenous centre on-campus, slated for completion in 2009.

Hunt-Jinnouchi looks forward to the day when on-campus and off-campus Aboriginal communities can take advantage of the First Peoples' House. Construction of the building will begin this fall.

Hunt-Jinnouchi said that modeled after "the traditional form of Salish houses," the First People's House will "provide the students with a sense of place, sense of support and a connection to home by just having their culture reflected [there]."

Alongside offices and lecture rooms, an elders' lounge and ceremonial room will provide a site for "multi-generational learning" amoung Aboriginals, students, faculty and staff at UVic.

"My focus is multi-generational learning ... because that models the actual Aboriginal philosophy and community practices," said Hunt-Jinnouchi.

Hunt-Jinnouchi stresses the importance of dialogue between the community and the institution, claiming that in order for the Office of Indigenous Affairs' programs and services to be "effective and sustainable over the long term," the community must provide the direction and voice that focuses the office for emerging needs.

"It has to start at the community level," she said. "It's extremely important to engage the community, allow for dialogue and true relationship building, and establish a collaborative partnership."

Aside from work as director of the Office of Indigenous Affairs, she is also chief of the Quatsino First Nation, the first female chief for her band. She was also the first First Nations school trustee to be elected at School District 85, Vancouver Island North. Hunt-Jinnouchi completed her undergraduate studies in social work at UVic and earned an MA in adult education at St. Frances Xavier's University. She was director of the Saanich Adult Education Centre for seven years. She serves on a variety of provincial and national committees, according to her biography as posted on the Office of Indigenous Affairs website.

Her UVic administrative position is the first time Hunt-Jinnouchi has worked in an institution. She said she has "always worked from a community-based approach," but she sees her work at UVic as an opportunity.

"By assisting UVic, I'm still working for the community. For me, that's very rewarding because I can basically have my feet in two worlds and still feel that I'm able to make a difference," she said.

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Frances Hunt-Jinnouchi is the first UVic director of Indigenous Affairs.

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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Victoria Cool Aid Society presents survey to the homeless

by Natalie Crawford

WESLEY SCOTT PHOTO

Many of Victoria's homeless residents took part in recent survey that could provide insight into the types of assistance needed.

Twenty-three questions were posed to the homeless in Greater Victoria to gain insight into providing better housing, jobs and social assistance.

The 2007 Homeless Needs Survey, administered by the Victoria Cool Aid Society, included a head count, and the voluntary survey and also covered homelessness in Sooke, Sidney and on Salt Spring Island.

"Unlike Victoria's only other homeless count, done two years ago, volunteers did not wake up people sleeping in the streets, in order to respect their comfort level" said Kathy Stinson, director of the Victoria Cool Aid Society.

Starting Feb. 5, numbers were recorded of people staying in shelters, hospitals, holding cells and a variety of other locations frequented by homeless people. From Feb. 6 to 9, a survey dealing with the needs of the homeless was administered to 1,000 homeless participants and various service providers. No names were taken, but anonymous codes were used in order to evaluate their progress in future studies. Interviewers gave out warm clothing, food bars and other small items.

"This is to get an updated number of people in our region who are homeless and find out from them what they need to be adequately housed," said Stinson.

One participant in the survey, identified as Scotty, who has been homeless for the past five years, agreed.

"Homeless people need a place to store [their] stuff...here if you fall asleep you get robbed. Other people take your blanket or sleeping bag, and then you have to start all over again." Scotty said he believes the survey will help to bring about much-needed change.

Another homeless man, identified as Dave, was less optimistic.

"They've been doing surveys for years, asking personal questions, but it never does any good." Dave proposed that the money would be better spent on giving first-time homeless people a chance to get off the street—a place to stay for 60 days in order to facilitate a telephone number and address that are needed for job interviews. "That's the only way people will ever get off the street."

NDP MLA for Victoria-Hillside Rob Fleming said that the coverage around the different regions will be more accurate this year.

"[It's been a] long overdue plan of taking action of this issue," he said. "Victoria is suffering disproportionately from very poor planning and poor responsiveness from the government."

Fleming said that the real estate market boom on the Island has raised rent prices, which, when coupled with cutbacks in social services, have increased the number of homeless.

The Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria has provided a researcher to handle the statistical analysis to complement the Cool Aid's Homeless Needs Survey team.

The Cool Aid Society hopes that the homeless survey will provide non-profit organizations and governmental agencies with knowledge that will help them better accommodate the needs of the homeless. Some of the volunteers involved in conducting the survey have been homeless at some point in their lives.

Stinson anticipates that the results of the full survey won't be available until the end of March. The results will be sent to municipalities of the Greater Victoria area and soup kitchens, where feedback is encouraged.

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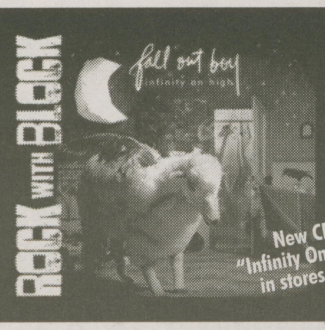

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COLUMN | TRANSPROSE

So-called feminists judged a woman by her looks

Shouldn't feminists oppose this binary, patriarchal and heterosexist thinking?

by Marti Waldman

On Feb. 1, the Supreme Court of Canada declined to hear an appeal on Kimberly Nixon's suit against the Vancouver rape counselling centre that wouldn't accept her as a volunteer because she couldn't pass as a woman who was born a woman.

For the majority of Canadians, the concept of gender in a society based on dualism is a simple matter. There are girls and boys who present, behave, speak and respond as patriarchal culture demands. But transgender minorities transgress those parameters and require new gender paradigms.

Kimberly Nixon completed her transition through gender surgery after living as a man for 30 years. Five years later, she applied to volunteer at the Vancouver Rape Relief Society (VRR) and was refused on the basis of her lack of "women's life experience." So, she presented a discrimination suit to the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal, which ruled she had been subject to discrimination and awarded her $7,500.

But VRR appealed to the B.C. Supreme Court, which overturned the previous decision and took back her award after ruling that her discrimination claim was untenable. Nixon now owes $10,000 in legal fees and is vulnerable to a claim of over $100,000 for VRR's legal costs.

The verdict confirms the rights of charitable organizations in B.C. to restrict membership on the basis of sex, gender, race or whatever else they see fit.

So when is a transwoman not a woman? Forever, according to VRR, which is ironic because they claim their operation is based on so-called feminist ideals. But don't feminists oppose the binary, patriarchal and heterosexist thinking that VRR used against Nixon? Or maybe a transwoman is a woman only if she can pass as one. The tribunal found that VRR acted initially on their assumptions, based on their perceptions of Nixon, not on any knowledge they had about her life.

But wait—there's more. In *The Transgender Studies Reader*, Andrew Sharpe chronicles European and Australian court cases wrestling with the legal definition of a woman. For some courts, possession of and heterosexual use of a neo-vagina is becoming acceptable proof of female identity. But, since medical knowledge sufficient to create a neo-penis doesn't yet exist, transmen have it worse.

Transgender is seen as a medico-political construct, not as an inherent bio-psycho-neuro-hormonal reality.

Anti-trans activist Janice Raymond likens us to a state-sanctioned, artificially constructed army programmed to take the places of born women and conquer the world in the name of patriarchy. And feminist writer Mary Daly calls us "monstrous."

Trans activists Kate Bornestein and Riki Wilchins hold that we are "transgressively gendered": neither men nor women but something else.

To French philosopher Michel Foucault, "sexual identity has come to stand as the truth of who we are." UVic Women's Centre co-ordinator Rebecca Taylor adds, "I believe that people have the right to name themselves and define for themselves who they are. This includes gender."

So, is Nixon a woman? I believe that only she can or should answer that question. And it's a right on which we insist.

Grandma lied: sitting up straight is bad for you

by Liz Durden

EDMONTON (CUP)—A quick glance around any university classroom or lecture hall will reveal one collective characteristic: students slumped over books and notepads. While not the healthiest of postures, the common-sense alternative—sitting up straight—may not be any better.

A recent study out of Aberdeen, Scotland, has shown that sitting upright at a 90-degree angle can put undue pressure on the spine and subsequently lead to damage and back pain.

Twenty-two subjects were observed in the study, which determined that it's better to sit at a 135-degree angle, called "Keegan's position."

"Keegan's position is almost a hundred per cent similar to the lying down position," explained Dr. Waseem Bashir, the study's lead author. Bashir also said they used the lying down position as a control in their study because it's the optimal position for your back.

"You have to try and open up the angle between your body and your legs—that's what's important. That doesn't mean you slouch; that's not good for your back either, because then you're not keeping your curvatures," Bashir said.

Bashir, who's currently at the University of Alberta hospital on a fellowship, explained that the study is a replica of a study done in 1953 by a scientist named J.J. Keegan, who used X-ray machines to study the angle of the spine and extrapolate what position was least stressful. The lab in Scotland was equipped with an upright MRI scanner, which is different than standard MRI machines in which the patient lies down.

"We had the opportunity of looking at the back in the seated position with gravity acting on it—nobody else has ever done that before," Bashir said.

He explained that with new technology, they could see the effect of spine position more in-depth and more accurately.

"Using modern imaging—basically MRI—we can see everything in there. We can see the bones, we can see the discs, we can see the muscles, we can see the tendons, the ligaments," Bashir said.

Bashir said back pain is caused by the loss of water in the spinal discs, which they measured in a separate experiment, also using MRI technology.

"The MRIs pick up a lot of hydrogen signals, and because water's got a lot of hydrogen in it, you can figure out how much water is in the disc," Bashir explained.

Results confirmed Keegan's 53-year-old hypothesis that it's better to sit with a 135-degree angle between your legs and your body and that the more acute the angle you sit with, the more it harms your spine.

"The more acute the angle between your body and your legs, the more pressure it puts on your back discs because you're bending forwards [compressing your discs]. The worst position of all is the forward bending, the hunched-over keyboard position. The second-worst position is the 90-degree position that we commonly sit in, and like most seats are made," Bashir said.

"We know there's a lot of pressure when we're sitting down because our bodies aren't made for sitting; they're made for standing and moving. Sitting down is a modern phenomenon in human evolution. We didn't sit down; we were all hunters and gatherers. We all sit at desks now and it's completely unnatural."

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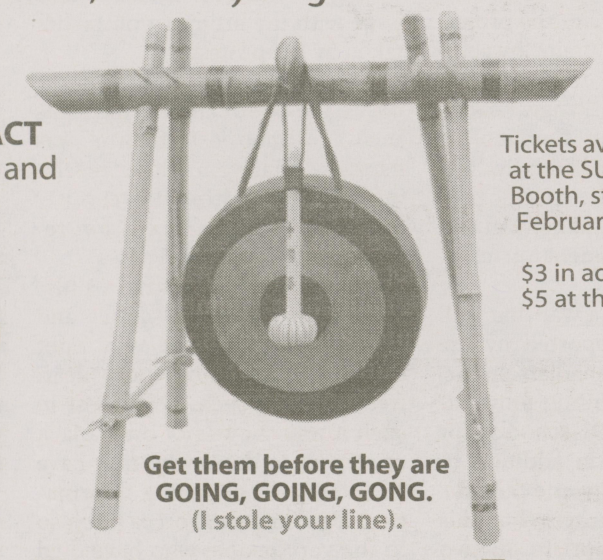

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Editorial

Don't care? Don't vote.

How do you pick between the short brunette and the tall redhead competing for chair of the UVic Students' Society board? You could go to the debates, read their platforms online, talk to them personally or read about them in this paper. But if that's too much for you, then do the rest of us a favour and avoid the polls on Mar. 7, 8 and 9.

In 2005, only 17 per cent of the student body voted in the UVSS elections. This is up from the 8 per cent that voted in 2002, but it's still way down from the 32 per cent of students that voted in the 1999 elections.

Voter apathy isn't always a bad thing. The people who put effort into their vote deserve their proportionally larger share of power. They are more likely to be passionate about student politics and are probably well informed about what matters to them and how the actions of the UVSS board affect their lives as students. It's these people—and not the voters who make their decisions at the last minute based on the friendliness of a candidate's plastic smile—who should choose individuals or groups that run the students' society next year.

This argument has often been used throughout history to defend a limited franchise—most often limited to wealty white male landowners. This history has tainted the legitimacy of the idea that it is the up-to-speed portion of the electorate that really matters.

The so-called popular vote has already landed California with the guy who killed both the Predator and Thulsa Doom. It has also created an electoral system in the United States that is based more on public relations and perception—that a good candidate is more down-homey than intelligent—than on party platforms and well-proven integrity. If media and pop culture campaigns like Rock the Vote continue to twist people's arms into voting, we're going to continue to see the wrong politicians voted in for the wrong reasons. The only way to alleviate that is to encourage only those who know their stuff to vote, slippery slope toward fascism be damned.

If you like to doodle on ballots more then you like to research your decisions, or if you're upset with the UVSS or feel that it doesn't fairly represent you as a student, there is still something you can do: spoil your vote. This means that you intentionally make errors on the ballot. The validity of some elections may even be called into question if there are enough spoiled votes. This way you're not voting under false pretenses and you can have your voice heard, however quietly. Draw a caricature of your least favourite prof, write some lyrics from a song or be unimaginative and just write "spoiled" on it—but don't neatly check a box unless you mean it.

It would be great if every student took it upon him or herself to learn about the candidates and their slates and then went and voted. But is that realistic in an age when voter turnout in the established democracies is declining? No, it isn't. So it's not the end of the world that our elections run on an unofficial limited franchise—limited to aware and democratically responsible student-citizens.

Editorial topics are decided on by staff at our weekly editorial meeting at 3 p.m. every Friday in the *Martlet* office (SUB B011). Editorials are written by one or more staff members and are not necessarily the opinion of all staff members.

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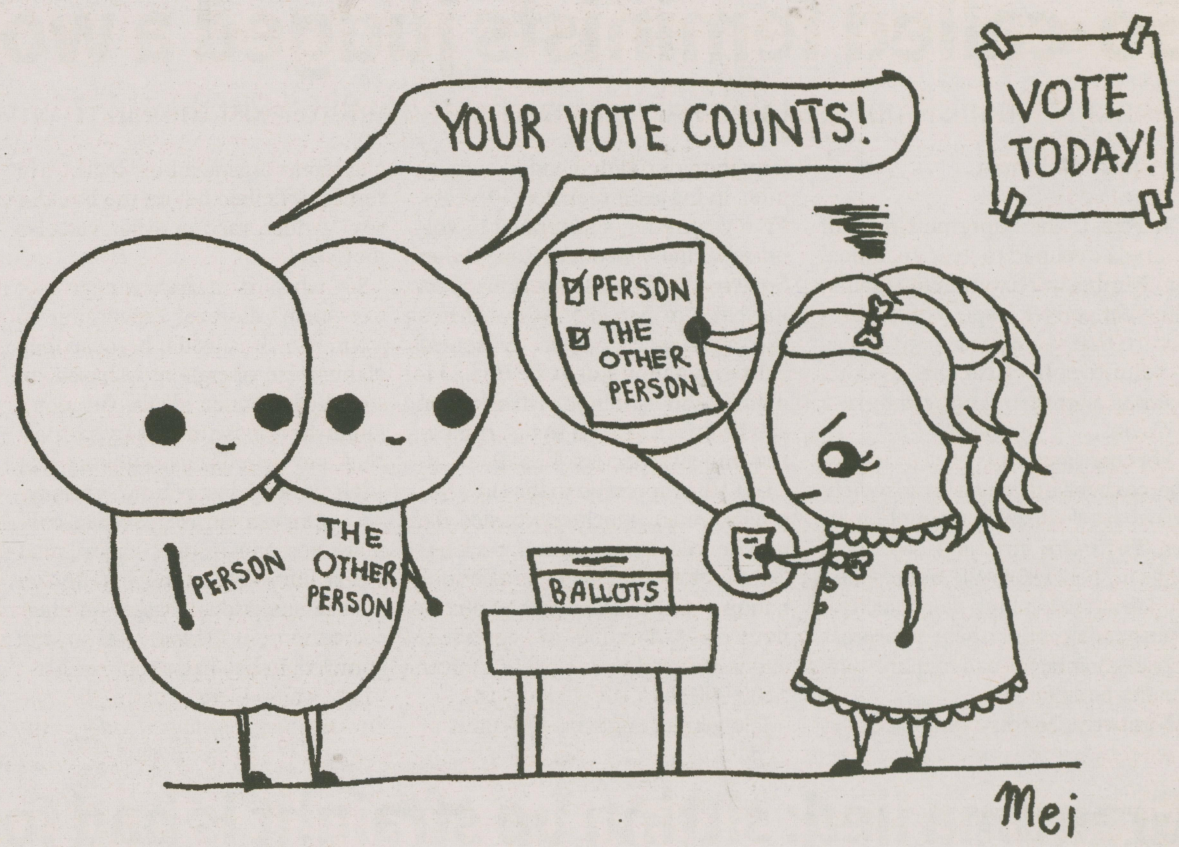

The Joy of UVSS Elections

MARY KARAPLIS GRAPHIC

LETTERS

Those photos sucked

I was appalled when I saw the winners of your recent photo contest ("2007 *Martlet* photo contest: love," *Martlet,* Feb. 7). The regulations, as I noticed, were to send photos of love, relationships and how we feel about them.

When I picked up the issue to see the winners, I could not believe my eyes. They were all calendar images. I guess I just thought that the person judging would have a photography background and good taste.

-Alex Greer, UVic Student

Apathy for dummies

I would like to clear up a misconception regarding the purpose of the demonstration at the Canadian Forces booth at the Career Fair ("Activism for dummies," *Martlet,* Feb 14). It is true that the aim of the larger social movement is to influence Canadian policy and to confront "the oppression of the world under the rifle barrel of Western capitalist imperialism" (a little wordy, but summed up nicely).

However, if Rasmussen had been equally as observant at the protest as he was in world affairs, by actually talking to the demonstrators or reading the 8'x 3' sign headed "De-militarize Our Campus," it would have become blatantly clear that there was a more specific purpose of the action; namely, an end to military recruitment on campus.

In gearing up for a war that is ill understood or supported by the majority of the Canadian public, the military is haunting universities, and even high schools, for potential recruits (in addition to their usual lower-income targets). The demonstrators felt that this conduct is inappropriate on two levels; shall I express them in the same rhetorical logic used to criticize the action?

Firstly, is it appropriate for a government institution to offer tuition incentives in return for young men and women becoming soldiers (contractual killers/ "freedom fighters"...?) at a time when the "defense" budget is expanding exponentially and thousands of students are marching on the legislature, begging for a pathetic reduction in tuition rates?

Second, does it seem contradictory that an institution (UVic) teaches us the ills, hypocrisies and injustice perpetrated by our military and then invites them to bolster their ranks from our student body?

I won't patronize your intellect with offering answers, and you don't need to be "congratulated." I will only remind you that the greatest strides in humanity have come from activism (not war), and it is apathy, not activism, which is for dummies.

-Tim Fournier, Canada Out of Afghanistan Campaign member

Protestors: show some respect

I am writing in regards to the protests that occurred during the recent job fair on campus. Several protestors set up near the Canadian Forces recruiting booth and made their opposition to the war in Afghanistan quite obvious.

I do not have a problem with protesting the war. However, I do take issue with the intimidation tactics taken by the protestors.

Holding their protest directly opposite the booth and having signs such as "legalized terrorism" was hardly conducive to either receiving information from the recruiter or simply having a discussion regarding the Canadian Forces.

The Canadian Forces have a history of distinguished service and have provided for the very right that these protestors hold dear: freedom of speech. To protest in such a way shows not only a lack of respect to those who may have an interest in obtaining information regarding the Forces but also to the very people who have died for these protestors' rights.

-Chris Trumpy, UVic Student

CF recruiter: get the message

In "Activism for Dummies" (*Martlet,* Feb. 14), Rasmussen states that activists hassling the on-campus Canadian Forces recruiter weren't thinking because the man doesn't set defence policy.

But Rasmussen might consider that the recruiter, as a volunteer in the imperialist military machine, firmly demonstrates his complicity. Indeed, actively pushing enlistment for Canada's war effort indicts him further still. Accordingly, he deserved not simply a "hard time" but also exposure for what he does and who he serves.

That said, activists must realize that Canadian imperialist occupation is not simply the result of individual policies but is also the logical extension of Canadian pursuit of profit and strategic posturing under capitalism.

Simply pressuring elected officials toward "policy reform" without confronting the underlying ideology of our economic system is not only ineffective but deceitful. By leaving the capitalist system (with its wars and systematic exploitation) firmly intact, temporary reforms can be easily reversed after the pressure campaign is demobilized.

Remember the occupation of Montreal in 1970 and the brutalization of Oka? Remember the torture of starving Somalis, the terror bombing of Serbia and the starvation blockade against Iraq?

Let's make it clear that neither the military nor their cop and CSIS cohorts are welcome on our campus!

-Crystal Oberg, UVic Student

Good opinions, for a change

Thank you, thank you, thank you for publishing Simon Rasmussen's wonderful piece "Activism For Dummies" (*Martlet,* Feb 15), as well as the two other great op-ed pieces by Steven Masuch and Nathan Lower.

After Norman Ed Baskerville's disgustingly disrespectful, horribly misguided and under-researched piece of "journalistic" crap that was "From peacekeepers to killers" (*Martlet,* Jan. 10), I was convinced that the *Martlet*'s op-ed section was forever doomed to insult my intelligence. Thank you for proving me wrong.

-Melanie Moore, UVic Student

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Inept profs need tech support

Classes delayed and cancelled due to of complex technology, a problem easily solved

by Patrick Wruck

Audio-video equipment, especially in the new Engineering and Computer Science (ECS) Building, appears to be extremely difficult for professors to operate. Not only is the technology too advanced for most professors, but there is no technical support—or at least the technical support has been unavailable during my classes.

The result: frequent loss of class time and even cancellation of a class.

I'm spending over $400 per course, so I expect the equipment to be working properly. When the prof can't figure out the buttons and switches, a techie should be ready to help.

I work at a pool, and we have a 24-hour maintenance crew ready to solve any problem that is too complex for the lifeguards to solve. These are complex systems to operate, and they therefore require specialized support teams.

A very similar situation exists in the ECS Building. If the university is going to install such complex systems, they must be prepared to have in place the necessary technical support or, at the very least, ensure the professors are properly trained to use these systems.

Perhaps professors should be required to attend a course in order to learn the skills needed to operate the equipment. A similar course needs to be implemented in regard to the operation of WebCT. I've noticed many professors having difficulty using this program as well.

UVic clearly has the monetary resources to implement simple and probably very inexpensive training sessions. The university had a quarter-billion-dollar budget in 2005-06. The administration needs to start spending funds where it counts.

Instead of focusing on socialist-USSR-style five-year-plans, maybe they should be tending to students' immediate needs that are clearly being overlooked. Students, and taxpayers for that matter, deserve better.

It's evident that there is a problem that needs to be solved sooner rather than later. Hopefully the university will take proactive initiative to determine where mistakes are being made and have those mistakes rectified.

This is a problem with simple solutions, and thus I do not understand why AV technical equipment still seems to be a persistent issue at this university.

Does your UVSS represent you?

They spend your money on DOA instead of advocacy and student groups—you voted for them

by Alex Chang
UVSS Director at Large

February 7 marked the Canadian Federation of Students' (CFS) Day of Action (DOA). At the back door of the legislature, the three Victoria chapters of the CFS, including your UVic Students' Society (UVSS), rallied students together to lament rising tuition fees.

Collectively they represented over 27,000 students. However, only 500 people were estimated to be at the protest.

I applaud the intentions of my fellow UVSS board members in organizing this event, but I have to call this a failure. If I were Gordon Campbell, I would have looked down at this tiny minority of the minority of voting students and felt very secure.

The UVSS spent almost $10,000 on this campaign. The CFS's expenses were in the hundreds of thousands. There was advertising all over campus. Students were given academic amnesty for the day. The weather was mild. There was no excuse not to go.

So, why was there such a poor turnout? I think the reason is that we don't have a students' society that effectively speaks to students.

The original mandate of the UVSS is to provide services that supplement the education of students. This is outlined in our mission statement.

But the UVSS board currently acts more like political advocates than like facilitators of student activity. I'm guessing this is because political advocacy is sexy and providing services is not.

If you don't think the UVSS is politically biased, then you should recall the UVSS-sponsored Rock the Vote campaign, which lost its endorsement from Elections BC because it was considered too partisan.

The UVSS has also clearly taken sides on a number of other political issues in its policy. The UVSS is for cannabis decriminalization, electoral reform and gun control. It is against free trade, NATO, fishing/hunting and my favourite: nuclear material in the SUB.

I'm not saying it's necessarily wrong to have a political position. It's good to stand for something. But who exactly does the UVSS stand for? There are students on campus who are for and against all of these causes, including the DOA protests.

As a secular students' society, our priorities have been biased. The current political campaigns budget is $7,225, and the DOA expenses exceeded this amount.

The inactive Armed With Understanding committee's budget is $5,500 and is supposed to be used to promote social justice. However, we have less than $600 left to donate to the activities of student groups.

At board meetings, we haggle endlessly with student organizations over amounts as little as $100 for their activities. We have also been very tight-fisted with the finances of the advocacy groups—groups that exist because it is difficult for most to understand the needs of minorities.

The UVSS is too stingy with people who want to do something to improve this school and themselves, but they rarely question the merit of their own activities.

I am for student protest, but no political stance should be given priority over any other by the UVSS. The students on this campus don't all adhere to one ideology. We are a diverse community representing the whole political spectrum, and a students' society is supposed to try to represent all of us.

If a student group wants to put on a protest, then we as a society have a duty to facilitate that. However, we don't have the right to impose our views on others by prioritizing our political ideologies over other groups' activities. We should be facilitators and not activists ourselves.

The UVSS takes money from every student with their tuition. Most students just accept that without question. So there is no question as to why the UVSS is so out of touch. Students need to speak up (at meetings or with their votes in the upcoming elections) to ensure the UVSS really speaks to their needs.

'Not a feminist' in women's studies

by Jessica Paterson

After bouncing through two universities and three majors, I have but one semester left until I begin my lustrous career as an elementary school teacher.

Never did I imagine that life would lead me down this path. Perhaps I should be more grateful, but when my PADRE report told me that I needed to fulfil a first-year credit in an unrelated discipline, I focused solely on the fact that it should be an "easy A."

I'm a woman; I'm a fourth-year student; I'm guaranteed to do well in an introductory women's studies course. And yet I find myself immersed in the course material, absorbing theories and genuinely looking at the world from a drastically different perspective.

Don't get me wrong—six years of school is definitely my limit, and I'm not honestly considering changing my major again, but this 100-level class is somehow having the strongest impact on me yet.

Discussing everyday issues, as we do daily in semi-circle formation, and deconstructing them through not only a feministic view but through a global humanitarian lens has lead me to think differently.

Let me make one thing clear: I am not a feminist. Often, I think this may be a bad thing. I am truly excited to one day have a baby and stay at home until it is grown.

Of course, I then look forward to a career teaching, but the point is that I do not feel pressured to postpone working. I welcome it. Please, hold the door for me, open the pickle jar, kill the spider—I enjoy my femininity.

But as I move through this course, I see the inequalities of our society. Some women do not want babies and wish only to succeed in the workforce. Their success, however, is dependent the acceptance men in what has long been deemed the "masculine domain."

Even after three waves of feminism, women still make only 70 per cent of what men make. I find that fact disgusting.

I agree that men are biologically stronger and therefore better suited for certain occupations, but if a woman can demonstrate equal strength then she deserves equal pay. In professions where physical strength is not a requirement, I see absolutely no reason why a woman should be paid significantly less for performing the exact same tasks as a man. Women need to question why they are seen as inferior.

Perhaps it is because our culture perpetuates this idea through highly sexualized media images of women. Movies, television and magazines all represent the woman as an object of male desire.

I have long been a subscriber to *Cosmopolitan*, and though I must admit I will be renewing my subscription, I cannot read it without being extremely critical after taking a women's studies course. The advertisements amaze me with their overtly sexual use of women's bodies—in a women's magazine, nonetheless.

Yet once again, my contradictory personality surfaces as I skim the pages. While I recognize that females are constantly exploited, I realize that I somewhat admire and model myself after them.

Fortunately, I am old enough to not fall into the psychological trap that many young girls do, sincerely worshipping the thin, promiscuous Hollywood ideal, but I do respect celebrities' dedication to their work and the inescapable publicity of their private lives. I must also confess that I conform to *Cosmo*'s fashion trends as well.

And overall, my lifelong goals are simple: a happy family and a comfortable career—although the farther I delve into women's studies, the more complicated I realize achieving even this will be.

Every day women are faced with inequality, and as empowerment only comes through education, I urge anyone (male or female) to take a women's studies class. Although final marks are not yet in, I am already glad I enrolled in this course, as I am sure everyone else will be.

Sexual Protection

HPV, cervical cancer and a new vaccine

by Lisa Clement
photos by Willie Li

If you are an avid television watcher, you have probably seen commercials urging young women to "Tell Someone." Maybe you didn't jump off the couch and spread the word about HPV (human papillomavirus), the sexually transmitted infection responsible for cervical cancer.

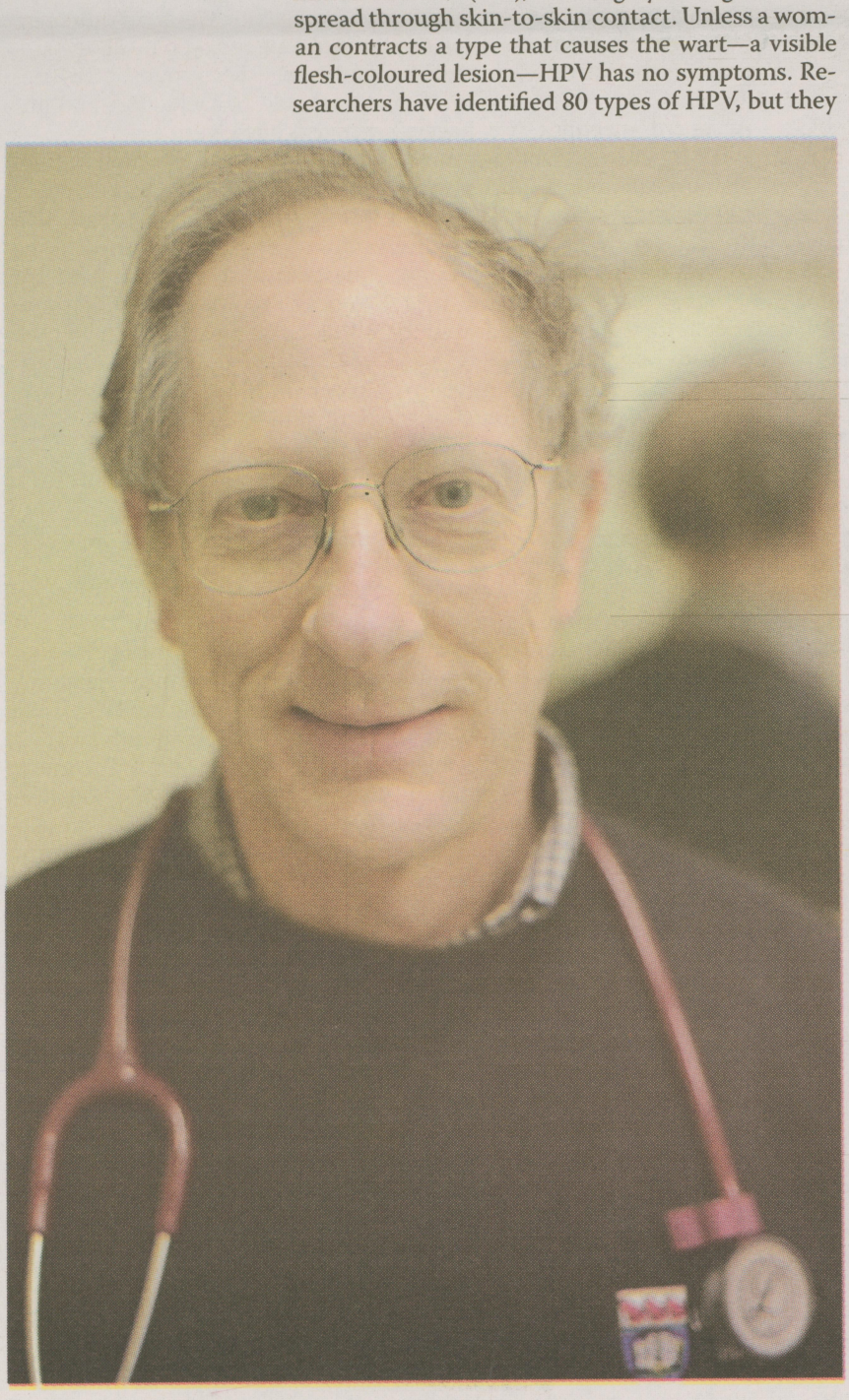
Health professionals, on the other hand, are hard at work trying to educate people about HPV and Gardasil, a newly developed vaccine that prevents the types of HPV that cause cervical cancer. The "Tell Someone" campaign, funded by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC) and Sexualityandu.ca, is one such attempt to teach people about HPV. But despite the efforts of several organizations, many young people still don't know that preventing cervical cancer can be as easy as getting the flu shot.

The STI called HPV

In North America, HPV infects half of all sexually active women between the ages of 18 and 22. More than 75 per cent of Canadians will have an HPV infection in their lifetime. In most women, HPV clears up on its own, but if the infection persists, it can lead to cervical cancer. HPV can cause genital warts, cervical cell changes, pre-cancerous cells and cancer.

The SOGC found that 87 per cent of high school students and around one third of adults have not heard of HPV. Those who have heard of HPV are unaware of how it is transmitted.

HPV is the most commonly spread sexually transmitted infection (STI); it is a highly contagious virus spread through skin-to-skin contact. Unless a woman contracts a type that causes the wart—a visible flesh-coloured lesion—HPV has no symptoms. Researchers have identified 80 types of HPV, but they estimate that over 200 types exist.



A celebrated vaccine

Each year, approximately 400 women in Canada die of cervical cancer and thousands more are treated for signs of pre-cancerous cells in the cervix. Cancer of the cervix is the second most common cancer for women between the ages of 20 and 44. Health Canada announced Gardasil, the HPV vaccine, in July of 2006 and it has been available to health professionals and pharmacies since August.

Heather McAdam, clinic co-ordinator at the Island Sexual Health Society in Victoria, says not enough people are aware of the vaccine. "The 'Tell Someone' campaign helped because it was on TV and people asked questions, but we have a long way to go as far as informing the public."

Until now, a woman's best defence against cervical cancer was regular Pap tests.

"This is perhaps the highest-tech vaccine to date," said Dr. William Dyson, director of Health Services at UVic.

The vaccine covers four HPV types: two high-risk types that cause cancer of the cervix and two low-risk types that cause genital warts.

"[Genital warts] is what everyone on campus is aware of and thinks is the big issue," said Dyson. "We are very busy at [Health Services] treating [genital warts]."

Of all the hundreds of HPV types, one does the most damage. Type 16 is responsible for 58 to 60 per cent of cervical cancer. Type 18, the second most common type, is responsible for 15 per cent. Other types account for one or two per cent, making up the remaining 25 per cent of HPV types.

The two most common causes of genital warts come from two types (6 and 11), which account for 90 per cent of genital warts.

Dyson recommends that all young women should get vaccinated. She says the UVic clinic regularly sees female patients with pre-cancerous cells in the cervix. Abnormal Pap smears can be signs of pre-cancerous cells and are caused by mild or subtle cervical cell changes (dysplasia or dyskaryosis).

"We have to follow these women to find out if the abnormality disappears over time," explained Dyson.

Women with abnormal Pap smears should be examined every six months. Subtle changes in the cervix usually disappear in time and the cells return to normal. An abnormal Pap test does not always mean HPV is present.

The vaccine does not prevent all HPV types from entering the body, so regular Pap tests are still necessary. As long as a person has not been exposed to the virus prior to vaccination, an immunized person is 100 per cent protected from the four HPV types (18, 16, 11 and 6) included in the vaccine.

Most women do not know if they have HPV, and a healthy immune system can ward off the virus. Genital warts are not harmful to the sexual organs. "But they make people feel terrible about themselves. It's devastating to people's self-esteem," said Dyson.

Currently in Canada the vaccine is recommended for women aged nine to 26.

"This vaccine means [Health Services] will be a lot less busy treating [genital warts].

Health Services deals with more cases of genital warts than cervical cancer, said Dyson. He'd be happy to see people getting vaccinated just for protection against warts, "but in the meantime, [she'll] get protection from cancer of the cervix—so much the better."

McAdam is an avid promoter of the vaccine at her Fort Street clinic. "I'm a lot older and I've been married for over 20 years, but if I were on the market, I would want to have it," she said.

The role of men

The "Tell Someone" campaign is leading the way in HPV education, but what the SOGC and other organizations fail to do is provide information for men.

"Men should worry about [HPV]," said Dyson.

A man's role in the epidemic is simple: he can carry the virus and pass it on to sexual partners without knowing it. While HPV is not as harmful to male sexual organs, men can pass on high-risk HPV types that cause cancer of the cervix as well as types that cause genital warts. And both males and females can contract the warts.

According to Dyson, the vaccine is currently not recommended for men simply because there is not a lot of the vaccine available.

"I imagine it will be quite a while before Canada will vaccinate boys, but it will go there. Boys are already being vaccinated in Australia," said McAdam. "I want my son to have it."

...But it costs $

The Island Sexual Health Society aims for prevention in their approach to sexual health education.

Pam Avery, medical office assistant and acting community educator at the Fort Street clinic, said the ISHS is promoting the vaccine just as it would any other method of STI prevention. "We keep all our clients up-to-date on the latest health news," she said.

The six Island Sexual Health Society clinics throughout Victoria run a comprehensive sex education program, offering sexual health education in schools as well as through workshops for community groups, parents and adults in Victoria and the greater region.

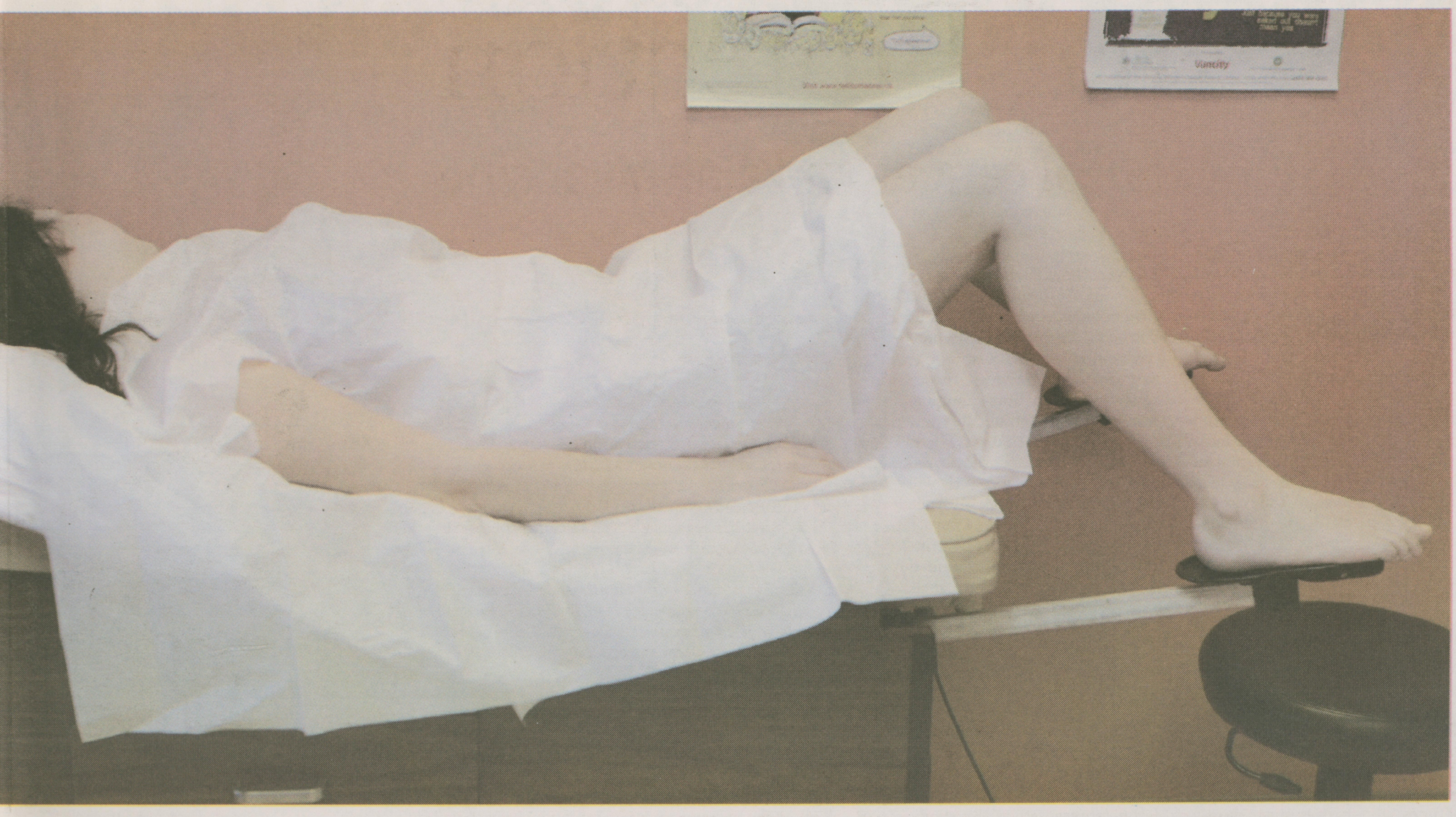
But getting the word out about the vaccine is only half the battle. The other half is how to pay for it.

"It has been hard to get the vaccine initiative going because not many people have $500 to spare. We tell our clients and most of them say, 'I'll think about it,'" Avery explained.

Because the vaccine has only been available to health-care professionals and pharmacies since last August, most insurance companies have yet to cover it.

So far the sexual health clinic has vaccinated hundreds of women, most of whom were in their early

Above: Taking the position for a Pap smear.
Right: A sampling of tools used in Pap and other tests for STIs.
Left: Dr. Dyson, director of UVic's Health Services, says men should worry about HPV, too.



20s because very few teens can afford the vaccine.

"If parents were involved, it would be a lot easier. Young girls can barely afford [birth control] pills, which is why I have yet to immunize a 15- or 16-year-old," said McAdam.

Luckily for UVic students covered by Green Shield, the UVSS health care plan, the vaccine is 80 per cent covered. The vaccine is administered in three doses over a six-month period. The cost is approximately $40 per dose with the student plan. For those covered by insurance companies that have yet to cover it, the cost is steep at approximately $180 per dose. The ISHS has made a deal with the Fort Street Pharmasave: clients who receive a prescription at the Fort Street ISHS clinic can purchase the vaccine at a reduced cost of $155 per dose.

"We are trying to reach the core group. Once the majority of young ladies have been vaccinated, young men will have it too," said Dyson.

"I wouldn't hesitate for one moment to write a prescription for a young man who came in and wanted the vaccine, but his insurance company probably wouldn't pay for it," Dyson added.

Dyson believes within a year most insurance companies will pick up the cost. Peoples Pharmacy on campus stocks the vaccine.

Age and risks of HPV

Both Dyson and McAdam agree that young girls should be vaccinated before they become sexually active.

McAdam hopes the HPV vaccine will soon be integrated into the school system where students will be immunized in grade 7, around the same time as the mandatory Hepatitis B shots. That's not so far-fetched, considering the state of Texas recently made the Gardasil vaccine mandatory for all Grade 6 girls. It is imperative to receive the vaccine at as young an age as possible, said McAdam.

"Age is important because it determines how susceptible the cervix is to incorporating these viruses into her DNA," said Dyson. "The younger the age, the more likely [a person] is to incorporate it."

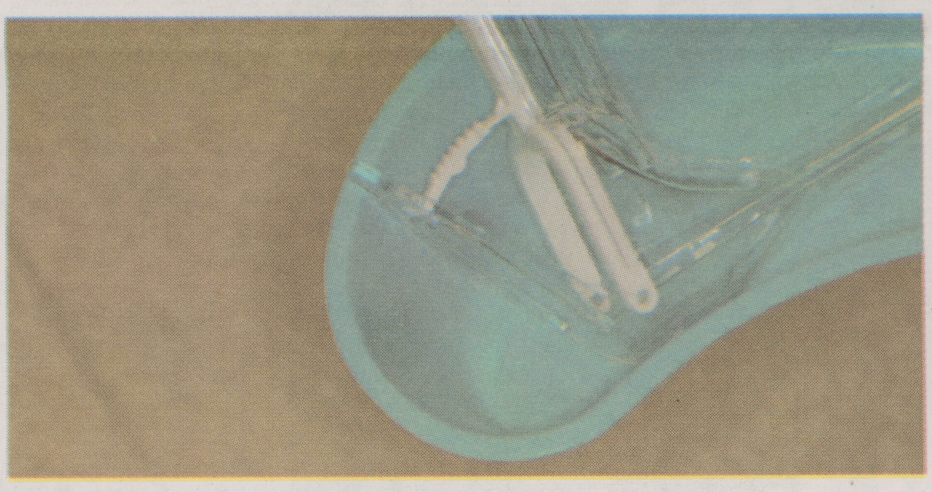
A woman who begins having sex at 18 has an average risk of cervical cancer. The risk becomes much higher for a girl who starts at a younger age.

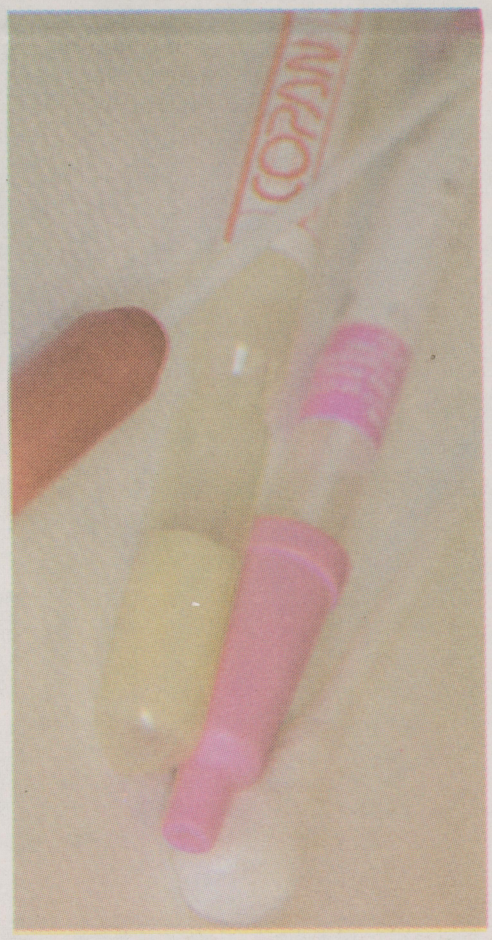
By the time a woman reaches 30 years of age, if she hasn't contracted HPV, her risk of cervical cancer is closer to zero.

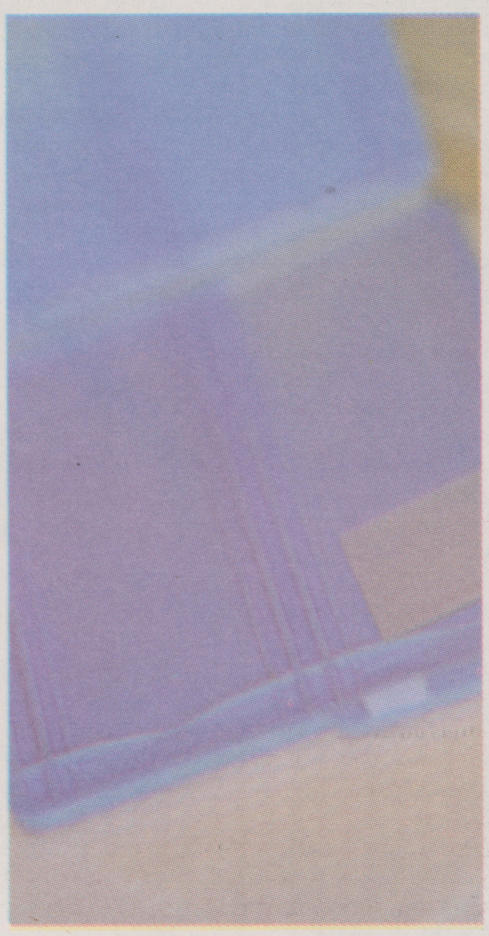
"Encouraging a person to wait for sex has nothing do with sociology or psychology—it is biology," said Dyson.

"Parents don't want to admit their children are having sex; maybe this vaccine is the last thing parents want," Dyson said. "But we've been seeing a lot of students come in here because their parents are telling them about the vaccine and wanting them to have it."

University students are more susceptible to viruses because they have more contact with other people and immune systems are weak because of stress, lack of sleep and a tendency to consume alcohol. Protection from HPV is all about common sense, said Dyson. He advises student to get vaccinated and stay informed.







HPV Quick Facts

An estimated three to nine million Canadians are infected with HPV.
Half of women aged 18 to 22 have HPV.
The connection between HPV and cervical cancer is stronger than the one between tobacco and lung cancer.
Condoms do not fully protect against HPV because it can be spread by contact with skin not covered by a condom.
Other cancers caused by HPV include vaginal, anal and penile cancer.

Napster wizard takes on DRM

by Kevin Ehman

Ever since the advent of Napster back in 1999, the Internet has shown promise of leveling the proverbial playing field and allowing consumers to dictate the relationship between themselves and the music they consume.

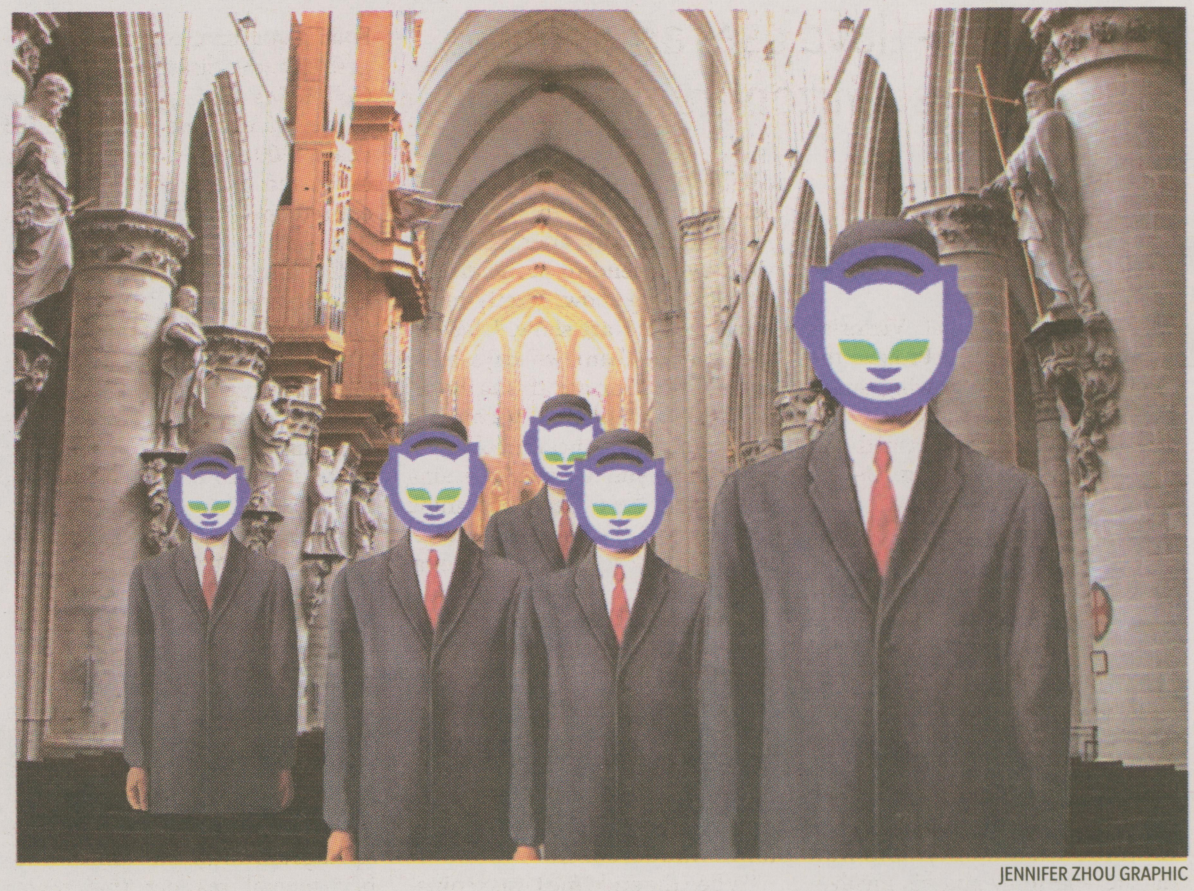
Monopolization of music distribution by the four major labels (Sony BMG, Universal, EMI and Warner) has resulted in a landscape dominated by Digital Rights Management (DRM) or, as critics have labeled it, "Digital Restriction Management," in which these huge corporations have total control over the way music is packaged, distributed and sold. The best example of the DRM nightmare is iTunes, where mp3s bought from the iTunes store will only play on your iPod, and "protected" downloads from other legal sources will not play on your iPod.

The problem with this system of production and consumption is that the world's independent music labels, which account for over 80 per cent of new releases and collect only 30 per cent of total revenues, were faced with an online distribution deficit—eg. iTunes' store carries music mostly from the four major labels—in which the corporate hegemony on sales pushed the consumer toward p2p software such as Soulseek and Limewire for access to new music and unprotected and by many standards, illegal files.

Fast forward to Jan. 27, 2007. At the MidemNet conference in Cannes, France, many of the world's leading independent music labels came together to sign a distribution contract with online music retailer Snocap, run by Napster founder Sean Fanning. Naming itself Merlin, the new network of independents hopes to form the "fifth major" and sell music through Snocap, which will also license sales through Myspace and YouTube.

Labels involved in this deal include Beggars, Domino, Rough Trade and Epitaph. These labels are home to artists as diverse and popular as Sufjan Stevens, the Arctic Monkeys, the Decemberists, Junior Boys, Atmosphere and the entire Elliot Smith catalogue.

The goal of this new venture is to capture 30 per cent of total music sales by "improving access and levelling the playing field for new and emerging media," according to Merlin representatives. By allowing artists and labels to upload, sell and profit in a direct relationship with the consumer, this new system will allow the average person to buy what they want when and where they want. Also, the unprotected mp3s bought through Snocap and Myspace will be playable on your iPod, something most current music online retailers are unable to provide.



JENNIFER ZHOU GRAPHIC

"Merlin has not changed our approach but will complement our current activities in digital media by collectively licensing the individually unlicensible [sic]," said Simon Wheeler, Head of Digital Beggars Group UK, via e-mail.

"If more value is created for independent labels, there will be more value created for our artists, and that's as simple as it gets," he said.

If this new arrangement spells the death of DRM and online hegemony by the traditional major players, the biggest winner is the consumer, followed closely by the independents, which for years have put out the majority of new music while reaping an unjust minority of the profit. Putting control directly in the hands of the modern tech-savvy consumer? That's an idea so crazy it just might work.

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Art therapy

Liam Hanna-Lloyd uses art as an outlet for his schizophrenia.

by Anna Kemp

Liam Hanna-Lloyd's first solo show felt more like a party than an art opening.

Last Friday night at Victoria's newest art venue, The Project, the wine and beer were flowing, snack plates and trays of cupcakes were constantly being replenished and later on in the evening, people were dancing to live music.

"Everyone I've talked to said they had a great time," said Hanna-Lloyd. "On Friday, my dream came true. Everything was way more than I expected, and I am kind of just coming down from it all now."

Liam Hanna-Lloyd, 25 years old, is a true Victorian. He comes across as shy and soft-spoken, mumbling a little and looking away as he speaks. But when he talks about how happy he is with his art, the show and his involvement with The Project, his blue eyes light up.

Hanna-Lloyd's paintings are striking visual collages of materials and images. He has mixed paper, fabric, wood and canvas, painting with oils, acrylics, spray paint and charcoal. Some of the pieces also incorporate shells and bits of wood or bone.

Hanna-Lloyd has been making art for most of his life: "My dad went to art school and there were more art books around than children's books. I remember doing watercolour paintings when I was five years old."

He didn't know if it would ever be more than a hobby until a trip to Europe he took after graduating from high school inspired him to pursue art seriously. "There seemed to be art everywhere I looked. It was so inspiring. I saw a Picasso and Salvador Dali exhibit, and that blew my mind, it really did. Pretty much the day after I got back I signed up for art school," he said.

After one year of art school, he decided to work on his own. He became involved with The Project Arts Community after being invited by a friend to participate in their opening show. "Pretty much since the first art show, I haven't spent more than two days away from here ... For me, this is the alternative to school. You come in here and you're always looking at something, you're always learning something. This is how I'm going to learn, and this how I'm hopefully going to become a professional artist."

Judging from the success of his first show, it looks like Hanna-Lloyd's art career is starting to take off, but it hasn't been an easy road. Diagnosed with schizophrenia when he was 17 years old, Hanna-Lloyd spent a few years going in and out of hospital as he came to terms with his condition.

"When they told me I was schizophrenic, I thought that my whole life was over. Then I started taking better care of myself and meeting good people who told me, 'You are bigger than that; you don't need to be in the hospital; you can do whatever you want to,'" he said.

For Hanna-Lloyd, creativity plays an important role in coping with his illness: "Art definitely helps. If I am hearing voices or seeing things, I can sit and paint and I am not thinking about those. It's not like I don't deal with it when it happens, but it's a way to escape, a healthy way to escape. To me it doesn't matter how sick I'll get, art is always going be there. Art is like my safe world when it comes to illness stuff."

Hanna-Lloyd doesn't want people to look at him like he's "just a sick person," he said. "There's a huge stigma around it, and that's almost worse than dealing with it yourself. I want people to know that if you have schizophrenia, you can find something that you want to do, that you enjoy and can learn about and make that your world."

No gold star for *Yellow Ribbon*

by Deena Kinarthy

Four years ago, one of the biggest natural disasters in British Columbia's history, a roaring 50-metre wide forest fire, engulfed nearly 300 homes and forcefully evacuated one third of Kelowna's entire population, rendering them homeless.

On Thursday, Feb. 22, another kind of disaster hit B.C. when *Yellow Ribbon* opened at the Metro.

What promised to be an important and topical piece about Canada's environment and a community banding together in the face of the fire, *Yellow Ribbon*, written and directed by Jennifer Braem, has delivered a superficial and disjointed theatrical take on a grab bag of real events and real people surrounding the Kelowna disaster.

There's no chemistry onstage between the mom and her children, in part because none of the actors are listening to each other. Sarah Pelzer has moments of comic lustre as six-year-old Emma, but the quality of her performance was upstaged this past Thursday by her general manner that night, which seemed wholly unfocused and scattered.

On the other hand, the writing has brilliant moments, including snippets of realistic dialogue, humorous monologues and clever one-liners. I especially enjoyed Scott Hendrickson's monologue as the Nietzsche-loving emo-poet teenager writing a love letter to his girlfriend.

The beautifully lit set, thanks to lighting designer Scott Powell, is well designed, but it doesn't hide the play's lack of directorial vision, style and most importantly theme.

Yes, I admit, I am one of the message kids. I instinctively grab on to the theme in every work of art. I think a well-directed piece sets up the message in the first few beats of a play. Throughout the show I kept searching for this message like a starved rabbit, the director cruelly dangling a fake carrot in front of me, hidden somewhere, I suspect, in the fuzzy distance beyond the curtain.

What did the director want? A satire? Narrative drama? Expressionist movement piece? A docudrama? The play shifts gears so abruptly from naturalistic scenes to actors playing animals in movement and dance; from making grunting sounds in *Stomp* form to a cacophony of sound and video clips onstage. I began to feel dizzy and crave carrots.

Here, let me throw you a few. Option one: present the facts, clips of real interviews and human emotions in a docudrama form, using mixed media. Option two: craft the play into a narrative drama that deftly comments on society's tendency to ignore other people and danger until it smacks them in the face.

Braem had an opportunity with this play to show what makes our community unique and special: the fact that we came together in the face of danger to help one another and, amazingly, not one single person was killed. She had an opportunity to show what kind of humane society we Canadians live in.

CFUV 101.9 FM

CFUV is the University of Victoria's Campus/Community Radio Station. To find out more information about CFUV, including our programming schedule, volunteer information and complete charts, please visit our website at www.cfuv.uvic.ca.

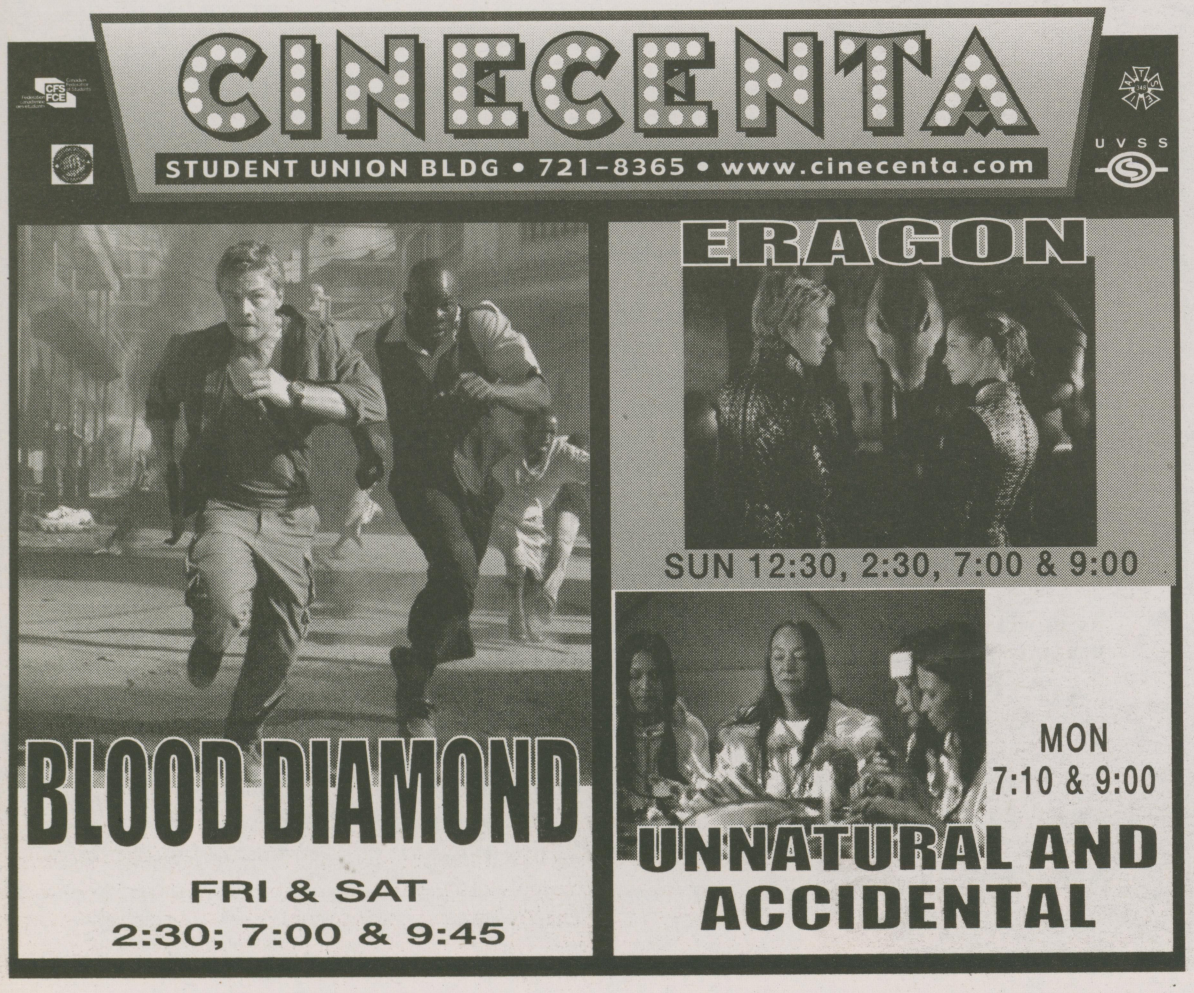
TOP TEN

FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 27TH

* means Canadian artist. † means local artist.

1. VARIOUS †
   Aaargh Annual: Year Two (Aaargh)
2. OF MONTREAL
   Hissing Fauna, Are You The Destroyer? (Polyvinyl)
3. DO MAKE SAY THINK *
   You, You're A History In Rust (Constellation)
4. GEOFF BERNER *
   The Wedding Dance Of The Widow Bride (Jericho Beach)
5. APOSTLE OF HUSTLE *
   National Anthem Of Nowhere (Arts & Crafts)
6. DOUG COX & SALIL BHATT *
   Slide To Freedom (Northern Blues)
7. BEIRUT
   Lon Gisland EP (Ba Da Bing!)
8. KIM BARLOW *
   Champ (Jericho Beach)
9. JEREMY FISHER †
   Goodbye Blue Monday (Aquarius)
10. MOTHER MOTHER *
    Touch Up (Last Gang)

Hear the weekly top ten on Charts and Graphs every Thursday at 3:00 PM on CFUV 101.9FM.



Poetry face-off

by Megan Drysdale

Martin Hazelbower, a fifth-year UVic student, won the Victoria round of the CBC Poetry Face-Off.

The event was held at Black Stilt Coffee House on Thursday night, where Hazelbower and four other Victoria poets competed for the title. The competition was hosted by Paul Vasey, host of the morning radio show *On the Island*. The audience voted for the winner.

The competition, in its sixth year, takes place in 14 cities across Canada, from Victoria to St. John's. Hazelbower, majoring in poetry and philosophy, will be featured with the other regional winners on five Poetry Face-Off specials to be played on CBC radio during April for National Poetry Month.

Hazelbower's winning poem, "Once Removed," is about a taxidermist who spends his time creating combinations of animals. On how it fits this year's theme, "Made in Canada," Hazelbower touches on isolation and the small town experience. He adds, "This is a country that can't agree on the historical or artistic traditions it belongs to—a really young country without a set mythology."

"My narrator's dealing with this by inventing his own mythological creatures. Hopefully they'll change the maple leaf on our flag to an oysterantula."

Competitors were chosen, according to Hazelbower, through "connections, I suppose. No official selection process—I just got invited. Like it's a secret society."

Carla Funk, poetry instructor at UVic and Victoria's poet laureate, and Wendy Morton, local poet and founder of the national week-long celebration Random Acts of Poetry, were asked by CBC to come up with a diverse lineup.

"We were asked to find up-and-coming poets in the city," said Funk. "We were looking for poets of different ages and levels of experience."

Besides Hazelbower, the other competitors included Dvora Levin, a management consultant who spent 13 years in Israel; Steven J. Thompson, co-founder of the Victoria Tongues of Fire poetry series; Waishan Yan, a young Chinese-Canadian; and Melanie Siebert, a non-fiction instructor at UVic.

"They really reflected the diversity of this city's literary scene," said Hazelbower. "Everyone met the theme's challenge with a creative, original viewpoint. I was proud to take part in this."

"Martin is a performer through and through," said Funk. "When he came out in costume, people could see he was serious about competing. It wasn't a reading, it was a performance."

Hazelbower attributed his success to borrowing from the storytelling tradition. "My poems usually have distinct narrators and plots that go somewhere. Plus, this one was funny," he said. "I do a lot of serious, philosophical, mind-searching stuff at readings, and it never goes over half as well. People don't get enough chances to giggle as it is."

Jets nominated for New Group of the Year

by Kevin Ehman

Apparently "New Group of the Year" is a relative phrase.

But for a band a decade in the making, it's recognition they most certainly will take. Victoria-based psyc-rock indie outfit Jets Overhead was recently nominated for this award at the upcoming Junos to be held in Saskatoon, Sask. on April 1.

While many of the band members have been playing together since high school, first under the moniker The Special Guest and then in the current incarnation of Jets Overhead, the nomination is seen as the product of years of dedication finally coming to fruition. "For us, as Jets Overhead, its not too weird to be called a 'New Group," said vocalist Antonia Freybe-Smith, who, along with drummer Luke Renshaw, joined the band after the Special Guests had dissolved, "but for Adam [Kittredge, vocals/guitar], Jocelyn [Greenwood, bass/guitar] and Pierce [Henwood, guitar/keyboards/management], who have been playing music together for a long time, they are like, oh my God, we've been in a group for so long, we're veterans here, don't be calling us 'New Artists' and stuff, but as Jets Overhead, when we analyze it, we do feel like a new group, so it's not too off the mark."

The band has been a regular at venues such as Lucky, Steamers and Logan's for years. When asked why the band has chosen to stay in Victoria as opposed to moving to a larger market such as Vancouver or Toronto, Freybe-Smith thinks the reason is fairly cut-and-dried. The number one reason is that the band loves Victoria. "Sometimes in a city like Vancouver or Montreal there are so many bloody bands that you can just get drowned in it, but in a city like Victoria, with a smaller community of musicians and music lovers, you can get in there and make connections, inspire people, and get people aware of your music. To me, it seems a little easier get a following in your hometown and then springboard to the next level, which is pretty hard, as we are quite aware of," she says.

For a band that has been playing together for three-plus years, and for musicians that have been playing together for even longer, a nomination for "New Group of the Year" seems to indicate some sort of arbitrary system of recognition in the Canadian music industry. Freybe-Smith agrees. "It feels a little bit like luck to be picked," she confesses, "but we try to stay positive and be like 'oh, they obviously heard something in our music that made us deserve the nomination,' but it does seem arbitrary on some level. Touring across Canada we've seen some incredible acts that just don't get the right breaks and they don't get to go anywhere, and it's sad, because sometimes the most talented, interesting acts just dissolve and it's depressing. But I guess life is arbitrary, and we always need to remind ourselves of that."

While Freybe-Smith might chalk some of their success up to the random nature of the music biz, Jets Overhead has definitely done the right things to gain recognition. Numerous tours across the nation have resulted in opening gigs for much larger acts such as Broken Social Scene—which Freybe-Smith said was a huge honour. "We were dumbstruck, walking around backstage like idiots, because we totally admire the band—the changes they have made, and the success they have found in the mainstream, which is amazing considering the music they play."

Founding member/manager Henwood has also worked various channels in order to secure the funding to take the band to the next level, including rants from the Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Records (FACTOR) for recording and shooting videos, which have received rotation on Much Music programs

PROVIDED PHOTO

Jets Overhead is nominated for a Juno award.

The Wedge and *Going Coastal*. "Its a lot of work to get the music out there, really a full-time job" says Freybe-Smith. "The more you know about the industry, the more distance you can make in it. Pierce is a great businessman and really a smart guy, and going through the process of securing grant funding is a difficult process, and we really couldn't have made these strides without it."

Jets Overhead's luck and dedication have resulted in success and recognition, but is the Canadian music industry structured to sustain the careers of indie bands such as Jets Overhead?

Freybe-Smith is wary but ultimately hopeful. "There was a real flourish in the last two years, with Arcade Fire and all that, but that burst of indie flame into the mainstream seems to be kind of doused right now.

"The whole *Canadian Idol* cookie-cutter pop stuff has to exist, as it's natural and you cant stop it. There will always be consumers for it, and they [record labels] will keep making money off it. Hopefully Canada, like the U.K. and sometimes the U.S., can create some form of happy balance where there is a sustainable market for indie musicians, where people are buying the stuff and going to shows, and where ultimately more differing forms of music are readily accessible."

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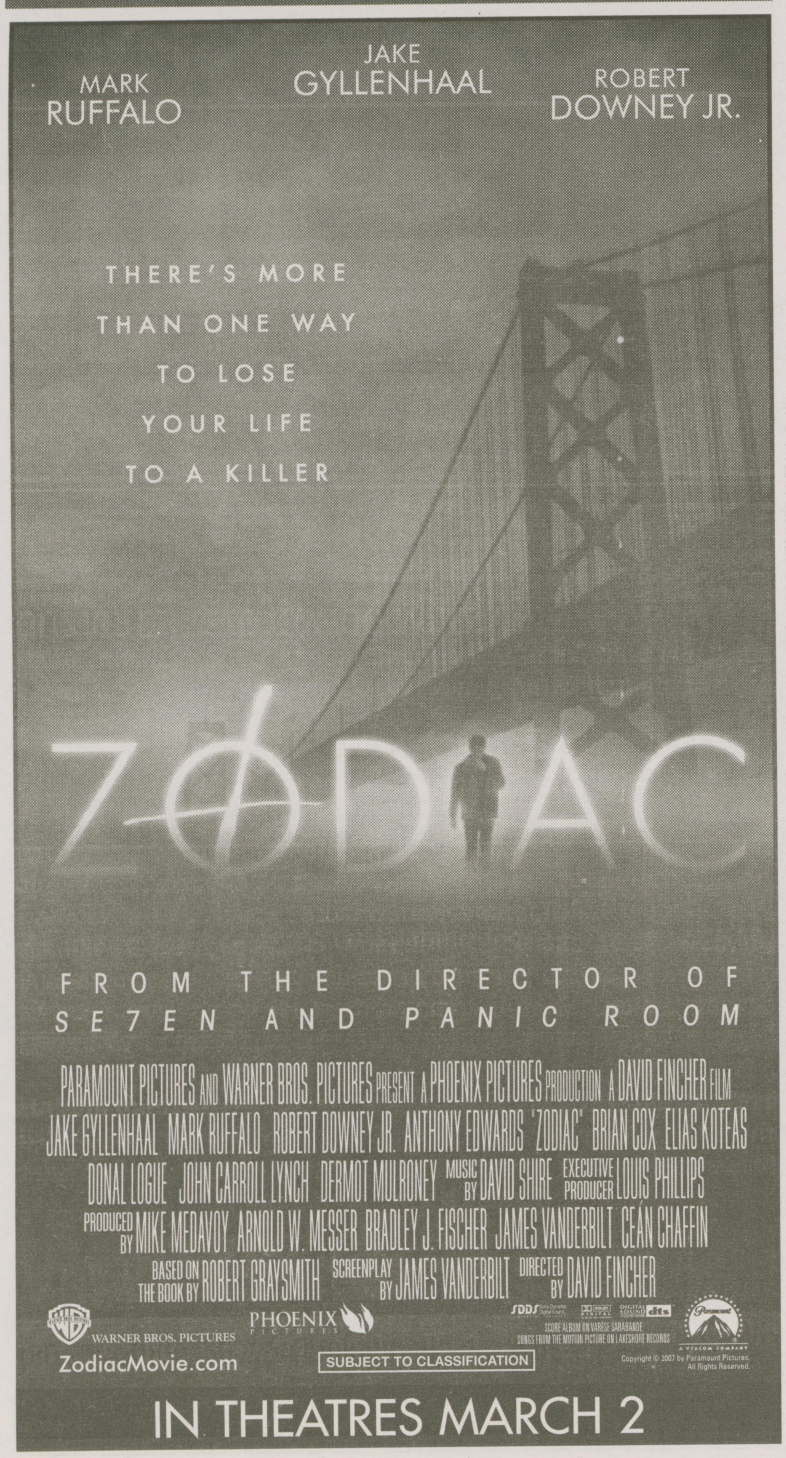


VIPIRG Spring 2007 Refund Period

The Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group (VIPIRG) is a student-lead non-profit organization dedicated to research education and action on emerging social and environmental issues.

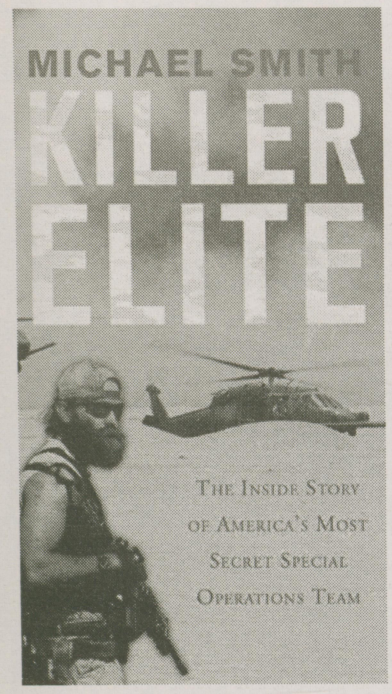
Achievements: Our resource library loans thousands of items to students every year. Our Working Groups offer the opportunity for students to become involved in social and environmental issues. We offer a series of popular workshops on community based research, as well as other events throughout the year. Recent VIPIRG projects include involvement in the Capital Region Food and Agriculture Initiatives Roundtable and the Raise the Rates campaign, working on radio accessibility issues, providing a prominent voice against cuts to Income Assistance in BC, and releasing reports such as *Denied Assistance: Closing the Front Door on Welfare in BC.*

Refunds: Every UVIC student is a member of VIPIRG and pays a membership due through their student fees. Undergrads pay 3$ per full time semester or $1.50 per part time semester. Grad students pay 2$ per semester. This fee is refundable by cheque to students during a refund period each semester.

The **Spring 2007 Refund Period** will be held **Monday, March 12, 2007 – Friday, March 23, 2007**. Refund forms can be picked up at the VIPIRG offices in SUB B122. info: 721-8629. Forms will be posted outside the office for convenience of students coming outside office hours.

BOOK REVIEWS

Go commando, lose the panties



Killer Elite
Michael Smith
Orion Publishing Group

by Mark Delan Seneviratne

Killer Elite takes you into the intrepid and powder-keg world of an ultra-elite Special Forces Unit that other elite units—such as Delta and Seal Team Six—rely on for ground intelligence and reconnaissance.

Author Michael Smith, defence reporter for England's *Sunday Times*, provides a chronological account of the unit's missions by the commanders who first conceptualized the team's role and the former intelligence officers who were involved. The unit was borne out of the disastrous 1979 mission code-named Eagle Claw to rescue hostages taken by Iranian students at the American embassy in Tehran following the Iranian revolution. This incident instigated a shakeup in how intelligence was controlled and disseminated. Miscommunication and distrust between the CIA and U.S. special operations had to be addressed, and a unit capable of independently gathering actionable intelligence created.

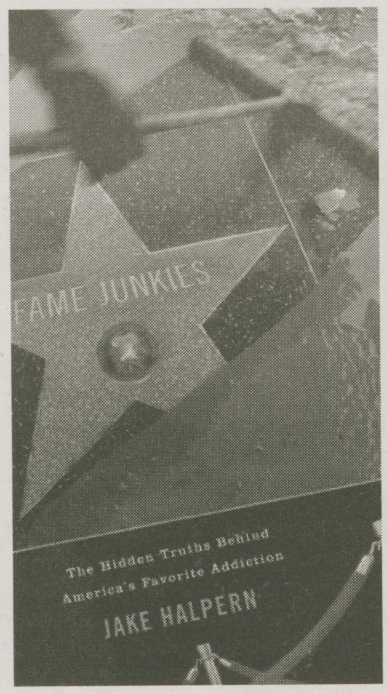
Officially called, the "Intelligence Support Activity," it became known as "the Activity," and was patterned on England's Special Air Service (SAS) and primarily on its "hearts and minds tactics, successfully used on defeating communist insurgents in Malaya in the mid-1950s. The Activity mapped out routes and served as a guide for special operations teams by laying out drop zones for airborne forces and analyzing target buildings. Once selected to be part of the unit, a member had to undergo rigorous training, including weeks of being deprived of sleep and sent to unknown cities to carry out fieldwork while eluding fellow agents tracking them. The team was vital to locating notorious drug lord Pablo Escobar in the early 1990s using heavily modified helicopters equipped with frequency scanners monitoring the cellphone use of Escobar's accomplices. The unit was very costefficient with their operations.

Michael Smith's writing reflects how this unit operates: sparse and raw, with a tautness that leaves no room for embellishment with repetitive adjectives. The book is a fact-based and informative read. Highlights include the exciting chapters devoted to snatching Bosnian war criminals and the convoluted collaboration with Italian special police to rescue an Army general held by the Red Brigade. The book also serves up the distaste that some commanders have for the Pentagon: "There [were] plenty of spineless bastards in the Pentagon leadership who blanched at the idea of military guys going on covert or clandestine ops." Therein lies the major theme of the book—that the Activity's advice and intelligence were ignored and shunned at times in favour of traditional military operations.

The title is a grab-you-by-the throat one, but is unfortunately misleading and an abuse of creative license—the book goes on the show that members of the Activity are not killers, and are more secretive than the elite.

Smith concludes that the Activity has a new lease on life due to the War on Terror, and senior Pentagon officials are pushing against some of the traditionalists and arguing for elevating its status within the intelligence community.

The book feels like a beginner's guide to military non-fiction, but alas, it misses out on some of the depth and authority of other tomes. But if you want to delve into the almost impenetrable darkness of U.S. special operations, then Smith's book makes for a riveting read.



Fame Junkies
Jake Halpern
Houghton Mifflin

by Meghan Nay

Jen, Angelina, Paris, Lindsay—I really love my friends. For years I've been poring over tabloids and devouring entertainment news. As a result, I have come to develop a special bond with the Hollywood elite. While other girls clamoured to find the new *Babysitters' Club* adventure, or spent afternoons discussing the antics of the *Saved by the Bell* crew, I had my nose firmly stuck in the latest celebrity rag. From the time I was 12, I could tell you exactly how many crunches Britney did to keep fit, rattle off Gwen's exes like the alphabet and recite the middle name of every Backstreet Boy.

The result of my devotion? I want to be famous—I deserve to be famous. And it seems I'm not alone.

Jake Halpern's latest bestseller, *Fame Junkies*, explores society's increasing obsession with celebrity. In the section "The World of Celebrity Worshippers," he laments, "when given the option of pressing a magic button and becoming either stronger, smarter famous, or more beautiful—young girls overwhelmingly opt for fame."

Well, duh!

I'd shell out for a swatch of celebrity red carpet, and I'd blush at the fact that I'd rather be a celeb personal assistant than some CEO or major politician. And, yes, I really would rather have dinner with JLo than with Jesus.

I wanna be a Britney, dammit, and I don't care who knows it.

I figured the best way to feel like "one of the gang" would be to emulate the celebrity lifestyle I have so passionately studied. Gathering my tabloids, I made a checklist of the changes I'd need to convey an air of celebdom. Not only would it require altering my appearance, but also I'd need to learn a number of new skills (smoking) and adopt a few new habits (binging and purging).

First up? Lose the undies, just like Britney did in a recent night, on the town. The hype that ensued was so huge it made mainstream news outlets like Fox News. So off they came and off I went. I'll admit to feeling a little uncomfortable at first. I thought I'd be clever and wear jeans instead of a skirt, but I ended up chafing so badly in my Gap low-riders I couldn't resist scratching in public (which, I guess, explains why Brit was sporting a dress—touché).

I toyed with the idea of losing a bunch of weight so I could look scary skinny like Nicole Richie and Mary-Kate Olsen, but after three hours on my no-fat, no-carb, no-sugar diet, I gave up and ate a Big Mac. Guess I'll have to settle for "trendy-fat" like Kate Winslet. But hey, she has been nominated for lots of Oscars.

If I couldn't achieve the appropriate body type, I decided I could at least dress the part. I carefully planned my Monday's outfit straight out of *US Weekly*'s "Look of the Week" section. I shimmied into my tightest skinny jeans and my sexiest cleavage-enhancing tank, donned my highest stilettos and accessorized with the largest pair of sunglasses I could find. Walking to class I felt stylish, sleek and hip. I imagined paparazzi hiding in the bushes, desperate to snap a photo of my fabulous self. I was ready for Marc Jacobs' runway, strutting arm in arm with Giselle.

Sort of.

Because of the enormity of the sunglasses, which took up two-thirds of my face, I didn't see the parking meter up ahead until I smacked right into it. To make matters worse, my jeans were so tight I talked in a whisper and had to undo my fly when I sat down. As I entered my classroom I rolled an ankle on my three-inch heel, sending me headfirst into a garbage can. But practice makes perfect, right?

Not quite. It spiralled downhill from there. On Friday, I decided to take up binge drinking, but I learned on Saturday that Lindsay Lohan had joined AA, and I immediately declared myself in recovery.

Finally, after I tried to steal a lipstick from Pharmasave (so I could get thrown in jail like Wynona Ryder), my friends decided to intervene.

"Meghan," they vented over sushi and Red Bulls, "you're taking this too far—you've dropped your last name, for God's sake."

Clearly, they were jealous of my newfound fabulousness. After all, Halpern would be the first to agree I'm not the only one suffering from a serious celeb addiction. Today, more people are tuning into *American Idol* than the top three weekly news programs combined and magazines like *US Weekly* have seen a recent increase in sales of almost 20 per cent.

So while some may say I'm crazy for converting to scientology, planning to name my first-born "Banana," or simply idolizing strangers—I'd have to say they're wrong.

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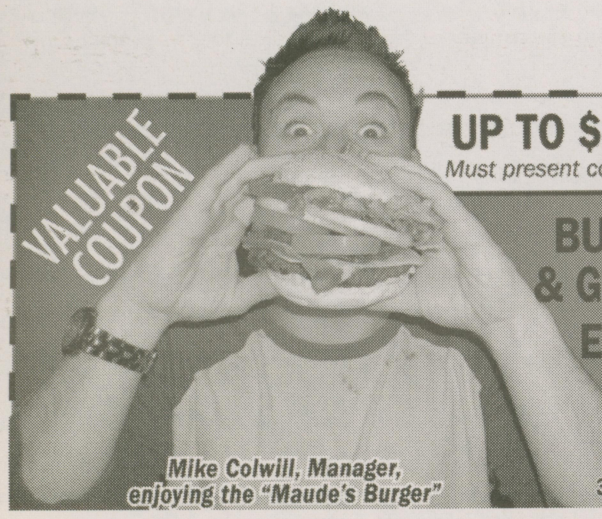

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Bringing Down the Biz– Oscars don't make the cut

by Josh Szczepanowski

Ellen Degeneres is so cute.

I'll admit it—I have a bit of a crush on her. She's just so adorable all the time, with her tennis shoes and her self-deprecating humour—which is why it's such a shame that she got assigned to the bloated hog that is the Academy Awards.

Maybe I'm admitting my age here, but I remember when the Oscars were interesting and funny, and filled with compelling neck-and-neck races between pictures that deserved the praise they were getting. I remember actors and actresses who were working to advance their craft. I remember hosts who had complete control over the whole spectacle.

Not this time.

This year, the Oscars started with a whimper, not a bang. I know they have to lead up to the big finale of Best Actor, Best Actress and Best Film, but, wow, way to begin on the wrong foot with Best Art Direction. Having Nicole Kidman present was a major mistake. She, the first of many tonight, proved that she can't read words off a teleprompter worth a damn. How do these people survive in the acting world?

I understand that the Academy Awards are a huge undertaking, but they come across like a middle-school Christmas pageant. There were more teleprompter mistakes than you could shake a statuette at.

Will Smith's son was probably the worst offender, and Anne Hathaway and Emily Blunt giggled the entire way through their introductions, but they can be forgiven—they were adorable. Clint Eastwood couldn't read the teleprompter either, but he's old and didn't have his glasses.

The awards were bloated with stars. Ben Affleck was invited, a grave mistake by the committee, and as if that wasn't enough, for some unfathomable reason Celine Dion was also invited. Melissa Etheridge didn't need to be on-stage for her song—she fully faked her musical performance. And maybe this is too much to ask, but next year perhaps they could consider fading musical interludes out instead of just cutting them cold like they did this time around.

As the boring awards began to drag on, I couldn't help but notice that Ellen was barely in them. It's funny, the way they are these days, where there's all sorts of excitement about the host, and they do interviews and photoshoots and ads all over the place, and then they're hardly in the show. Ellen appeared in the opening—sinking like a stone under probably the worst monologue of her life—and then sprinkled through the rest of the show with short comedy skits, utterly lost on the huge stage. Unfortunately for her (and the viewers), most of her skits were terribly unfunny. Saddest of all was her outfit: a cranberry-coloured velvet faux-tuxedo and the ubiquitous tennis shoes. Ugh!

PROVIDED PHOTO

Ellen didn't get a lot of screen time as host of the 79th Academy Awards–maybe it was the tux.

Of course, fashion is what the Oscars are all about, and this year was no exception. Designer names were being thrown about so quickly on the red carpet that I felt like I was competing in the hundred-metre dash through a Holt Renfrew. Some people looked wonderful—the always somewhat smug Cate Blanchett and my personal favorite, Jodie Foster, come to mind - while others looked horrid. Cameron Diaz certainly won Worst Fake Tan this year, while poor little Abigail Breslin looked like she was wrapped in a waffle.

In men's style, nothing ever changes—everyone wore tuxes, of course. Hairstyles, on the other hand, can get pretty exciting. Some never change, like George "So What If I Haven't Won an Oscar" Lucas's double-chin comb-over beard. Then there was Jack "The Head" Nicholson. For some reason, he decided to pull a Britney and shave his skull completely. Mind you, Spears doesn't have any varicose veins on her cranium. I've never noticed before just how huge Nicholson's head is—I could feel it invading my personal space from the other side of the TV screen. It made me distinctly uncomfortable and it made him completely unrecognizable—I'm sure millions of home viewers were wondering why Uncle Fester was at the ceremony. For his sake, I hope it's just a questionable decision in the barbershop, not cancer.

Of course, the show is supposed to be about awards, and there were some handed out. Most of the winners this year were well-deserving. Helen Mirren won best actress, Forest Whitaker won best actor, and *Pan's Labyrinth* cleaned up the special effects awards. Martin Scorsese won his long-overdue pity Oscar for directing *The Departed*.

This year's best moment was Jennifer Hudson's winning the Best Supporting Actress Award for the movie I consider to be the worst of the year, *Dreamgirls*. She was the only redeeming feature of that film, and it was beautiful to watch her win this award. The fact that she was able to go from losing on *American Idol* to winning an Oscar just goes to show that there's still some magic in the movies after all.

Top 10 Oscar moments

by Laura Cameron

1972 Sacheen Littlefeather took the stage to say, "Marlon Brando very regretfully cannot accept this very generous award. And the reason for this being is the treatment of American Indians today by the film industry."

Scandal erupted when Hollywood found out "Littlefeather" was not Maria Cruz's real name. She was labeled a fake Indian, despite her Apache, Yaqui, Pueblo and Caucasian blood.

1977 Paul Williams, composer of the love-ballad "Evergreen" with Barbara Streisand, said, "I was going to thank all the little people, but then I remembered I am the little people."

1968 Rod Steiger won Best Actor for "In the Heat of the Night" and thanked the Maharishi.

1985 Most mis-repeated Oscar sound bite Sally Field: "You like me; right now you like me."

1992 Jack Palance said he "craps bigger" than *City Slickers* co-star Billy Crystal and did a number of one-handed push-ups on stage.

2007 Ellen Degeneres asked Steven Spielberg to take a picture of her with Clint Eastwood for her MySpace, "Make sure we're both in Steven. Can you make it more even on both sides?"

2002 Although in previous years Woody Allen didn't turn up to accept his three Oscars, he made an unannounced appearance in 2002 to ask directors to continue shooting in New York after the 9/11 attacks. He added, "when the Academy called, I panicked. I thought they might want their Oscars back, and the pawn shop has been out of business for a while."

1981 Robert DeNiro thanked Jake Lamotta "even though he's suing us," when he won best actor for *Raging Bull*.

1998 Arnold Schwarzenegger joked, "My friend James Cameron and I made three films together: *True Lies*, *The Terminator* and *Terminator 2*. Of course, that was during his early, low-budget, art-house period."

1999 In his acceptance speech, Roberto Benigni exclaimed, "Thank you, thank you. I want to be rocked by the waves of your love," and "I would like to be Jupiter and kidnap everybody and lie down in the firmament making love to everybody."

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Screw the Oscars. Watch sports movies.

The *Martlet* shares its picks for the most epic film about each of eight different sports

by *Martlet* staff

There's no Oscar out there for the best sports movie, but perhaps there should be. This week, the *Martlet* shares our picks for the best and worst flicks about a wide variety of sports.

Baseball
The Sandlot (1993)

When you strip down the enormous scale of most sports movies, the story and the characters you're left with are often pretty weak. That's why *The Sandlot* works so well: it focuses on the sport at its most basic and beloved, rather than on the fame, glory and corporate involvement that goes along with the pros.

About a group of friends and their attempts to get a baseball signed by Babe Ruth back from a scary neighbour's yard, *The Sandlot* actually cares about its characters. It treats their small-town worries of rival pickup teams and vicious dogs with a human touch, taking their lives, their dreams and their childhood foibles seriously.

Though it is undeniably corny, *The Sandlot* succeeds because it doesn't try to do anything more than give us a heartwarming story of a sport played for the love of it.

- Hilary Agro

Basketball
Hoop Dreams (1994)

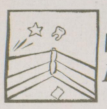
Hoop Dreams follows the four-year high-school career of two inner-city kids, Arthur Agee and William Gates, who both aspire to one day make the NBA.

The film is a documentary, but the results are so good that they seem scripted: Gates blows out his knee as a sophomore after being touted as the next Isiah Thomas, while Agee gets money for clothes from local drug dealers. Gates impregnates his girlfriend to become a father at 16 and Agee's father is seen buying crack while his son is playing pickup.

The filmmakers endured near-poverty for this movie to come to fruition. The result is a documentary that is not only about basketball, but that is also a social statement about race relations, class divisions, and the education system as seen through the eyes of two families in a low-income neighbourhood of Chicago.

And you were thinking the best basketball film would be *Hoosiers*?

- Matthew Lundy



Boxing
Rocky (1976)

Filmed in a mere 28 days, this celebrated loser-to-hero sports movie was not only a crowd-cheering box office success—it earned 10 Academy Award nominations and won three, including Best Picture.

The screenplay, written by then-unknown Sylvester Stallone, tells the tall tale of a struggling, wannabe-has-been boxer who becomes the last-minute replacement opponent in a heavyweight match against champion Apollo Creed.

Modern audiences who only know Stallone as a washed-up action movie star would be astounded to witness his gritty, well-rounded and often poignant performance as Rocky Balboa. The charm of *Rocky* is that although Balboa loses the inhumanly violent fight, he goes the distance and proves to himself he can be a contender.

- Norman Ed Baskerville

Football
The Program (1993)

If when you watch a football movie you watch it for the football, then *The Program* is the movie for you.

Director David S. Ward brings knee-wobbling intensity to the gridiron scenes in his critical take on college football. The film's pure physicality knocks the snot out of every other football flick. While the plot doesn't bring many surprises, you'll be moved by the painful story behind Steve Lattimer's (Andrew Bryniarski) war paint and feel outraged as the big-money collegiate football machine disposes of its fallen warrior, Alvin Mack (Duane Davis).

If you want great drama, look elsewhere. But if you want pad-popping, run-stuffing, smash-mouth football wrapped up in a movie, *The Program* goes full tilt from whistle to whistle.

- Nathan Lowther

Golf
Happy Gilmore (1996)

Happy Gilmore is not only Adam Sandler's best movie—it's one of the funniest movies of the 90s.

Gilmore is a failed hockey player with a killer slapshot that translates into an unreal drive when he is forced to switch from the rink to the links to save his beloved grandma's house—with hilarious results. Christopher McDonald has had a hard time not being typecast since playing such a perfect bitter antagonist. And Ben Stiller's tyrannical character, complete with child-molester moustache, delivers one of the most famous *Gilmore* lines after Happy's grandmother asks if she could trouble him for a warm glass of milk: "You could trouble me for a warm glass of shut the hell up."

When it comes down to it, there's just no way a movie that has Bob Barker kicking the crap out of Adam Sandler can be anything but golden.

- Hilary Agro

Hockey
Slap Shot (1977)

Filmed during the heyday of the hockey goon era, when the Philadelphia Flyers earned the nickname "Broad Street Bullies," *Slap Shot* spins the yarn of a sorry minor league team who literally beat opposing teams into submission.

At its core the plot is just another underdog story, but it is perfectly executed in its energetic and brutal telling.

The charismatic Paul Newman leads a cast of unforgettable characters—the three actors who played the ever-fighting Hanson Brothers are still celebrated at rinks to this day. Devilishly fun, profanity-filled, action packed—*Slap Shot* is a hockey movie for the ages, even if its R-rating makes it inappropriate for all ages.

- Norman Ed Baskerville

Horse Racing
The Black Stallion (1979)

A visual masterpiece, *The Black Stallion* is an epic story where the feel-good racetrack finale works because the filmmakers take the time to ensure you care about the horse and rider. The cast's performance is balanced and honest, making this so-called children's movie emotionally satisfying for audiences of all ages.

The first half of the movie, about a boy and a horse shipwrecked together on an island, is more or less silent. The captivating cinematography conveys both the island's beauty and its barrenness without becoming sappy or banal. The second half of the film revisits the formulaic underdog-triumphs-against-adversity theme common to horse race romps like *National Velvet*.

But even with its predictable winning-against-all-odds ending, *The Black Stallion*'s climax is a thunder-hoofed thrill.

- Norman Ed Baskerville

Soccer
Victory (1981)

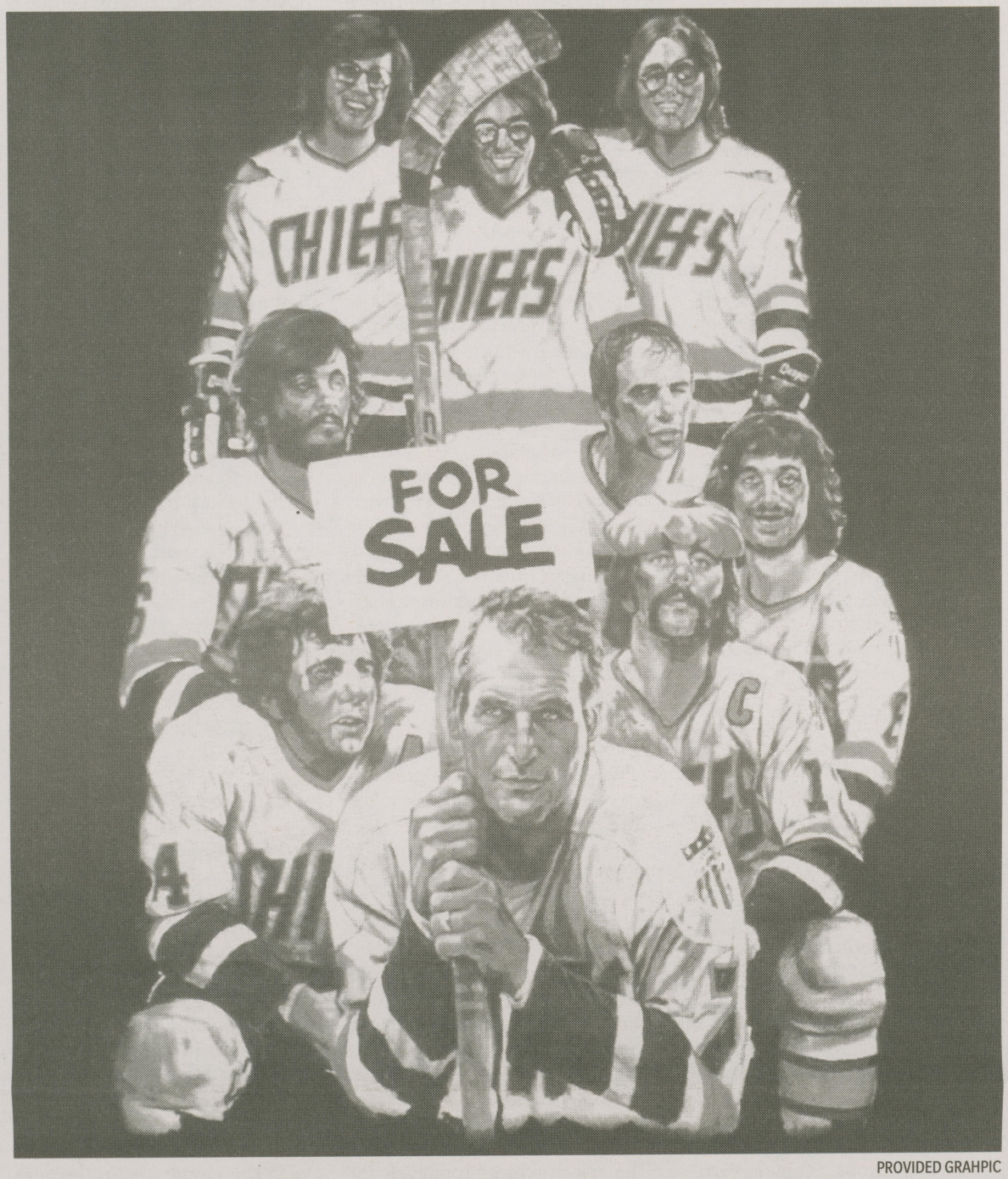
It's hard not to love a movie that credits Pelé as Soccer Play Designer.

In this little-known classic, a team of Allied Second World War prisoners take on the German national squad in a soccer game arranged to fuel the Nazi propaganda machine.

The acting is crappy, with such stars as Michael Caine, Sylvester Stallone, English-soccer great Bobby Moore and a barely understandable Pelé putting in wooden performances. But it's not the acting that makes *Victory* the best soccer flick ever. Director John Huston (yes, that John Huston) brilliantly explores the "soccer is larger than life" theme that makes this a movie anyone who understands passion can enjoy—if they love two teams kicking the hell out of each other all over the park. By the time the surprise ending rolls around, even devout soccer haters will be cheering and goose-pimply.

So goose-step your way down to the video store and rent this flick! Schnell!

- Wayne Potoroka



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JOCK TALK

"There were some horseshit calls against us. But you're always going to be in games like that."

- Vikes guard Brandon Ellis

Sports films strike out at box office

The *Martlet* shares its selections for the worst sports flicks of all time

by *Martlet* staff

Every genre of movie has its spectacular masterpieces as well as its bellyflops, and sports films are no exception. For the more daring among us, the *Martlet* reviews the worst sports films of all time.

Baseball
Hardball (2001)

This formulaic film took such delight in shoving all kinds of stereotypes so far down our throats that they had to hire CPR-certified ushers at theatres.

In *Hardball*, the lives of a team of down-and-out black kids from the Chicago projects are turned around by a white, alcoholic, indebted gambler, and vice-versa. Makes perfect sense.

Keanu Reeves' slack-jawed acting aside, the producers clearly thought that shamelessly manipulative plot devices and predictable poignancy were enough to carry the movie into the hearts and wallets of the general population, and unfortunately, they were right. But it doesn't matter how many cute little kids you shoot in the chest for shock value, people who truly appreciate good cinema won't buy this crap.

-Hilary Agro

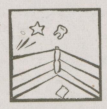
Basketball
Like Mike (2002)

The history of sports movies is riddled with children's films where pubescent boys magically jump to the big leagues only to dominate full-grown men. *Like Mike* is no exception, pitting rapper Bow Wow's wondrous 90-inch vertical leap against the likes of Allen Iverson and Jason Kidd, both using their limited acting capacities to pretend that Bow Wow is actually good.

Bow Wow plays Calvin Cambridge, an orphan who comes across an old pair of beaten-up sneakers with the initials M.J. on them. While attempting to retrieve the sneakers, which were thrown onto some electrical cables, Cambridge is electrocuted.

The movie would have been more believable if Bow Wow just died, but instead he inherits the talent of Michael Jordan. Any movie that stars a human being named Bow Wow cannot be good.

- Matthew Lundy



Boxing
Rocky V (1990)

After three successful but cartoonish sequels, Sylvester Stallone recruits the director of the original, John G. Avildsen, in a lame attempt to recapture the gritty spirit of the first *Rocky*.

Stallone sleep-acts through this bomb, portraying the beloved Rocky Balboa with unintentional parody. The tired, beaten brawler, now suffering from irreversible brain damage, loses the fortune he earned in previous sequels, moves back to the old neighbourhood and trains an ultimately ungrateful young boxer played by real-life former heavyweight champ Tommy Morrison.

Lacking even cheesy-fun character performances like Mr. T's in *Rocky 3* or Dolph Lundgren's in *Rocky 4*, the fifth instalment takes a dive the second it starts.

- Norman Ed Baskerville

Football
Any Given Sunday (1999)

A cast starring Al Pacino, Jamie Foxx, Cameron Diaz, Dennis Quaid, James Woods and LL Cool J, being directed by Oliver Stone, should be like having a receiver open deep behind the coverage. 1999's *Any Given Sunday* overthrows that receiver by five yards.

The plot skitters undecidedly and comes up short of the first down. The acid-flashback style of filmmaking employed by Stone is more distraction than attraction. Even football greats Lawrence Taylor, Jim Brown and Dick Butkus could not infuse intensity into the football scenes. The powerful locker-room speeches by coach Tony D'Amato (Pacino) are easily the movie's finest moments. It comes as no surprise that they are also the film's simplest scenes.

Overall, some decent acting is called back due to some unfocused directing in a frustratingly disappointing movie.

- Nathan Lowther

Golf
Caddyshack II (1988)

Eight years after what is often considered the best golf movie and one of the best comedies of all time came out, they released its retarded little brother on the world. This time, it was about wacky blue-bloods versus elitist snobs. Even Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd had no chance of saving this turd.

Golf is the only sport where you can be the best player in the country and have floppy man-boobs, because it's a sport where only five per cent of the time is spent actually hitting balls. That leaves 95 per cent of the movie left over for comedy.

Unfortunately, *Caddyshack II* decided that it would be easiest to fill said space with stale horseshit.

- Hilary Agro

Hockey
MVP: Most Valuable Primate (2000)

The most hapless hockey team imaginable transforms into a winner with the assistance of a hockey-playing chimpanzee in this (very sad sigh) Canadian-made embarrassment.

MVP: Most Valuable Primate is a predictable by-the-numbers kid's sports movie that prostitutes the cute chimp gimmick to a saccharine-sour level of wretchedness.

Jack, the chimp genius, escapes from a California college and ends up on a Canadian Junior B hockey team called the Nuggets. The ice-time shtick is horrid: the Nuggets practices are nothing more than tedious wrestling matches, and their games are so lacklustre one player actually knits on the ice.

Be warned that if you rent this movie, you'll wish you had some knitting needles too—to gouge your eyes out.

- Norman Ed Baskerville

Horse Racing
Seabiscuit (2003)

It's always tragic when a popcorn-fare movie actually devalues the good novel it was based on.

The Seabiscuit legend is set in the 1930s Depression. However, unlike the novel, the movie avoids exploring any real human drama inherent to the era. Instead, *Seabiscuit* trots along in the hoofprints of old Hollywood standards that extol the virtues of broken spirits and second chances with American-moxie-conquers-all thrown in for good measure.

Ultimately, in the absence of authentic dramatic tension, it's very hard to care if a crazy, underachieving horse and a too-big and too-blind jockey, played by the ever-smiling Tobey Maguire, win the big race.

- Norman Ed Baskerville

Soccer
Goal! (2005)

Diabetics beware: This barrio-to-big-leagues story is so sugar-coated it will send you racing for your insulin.

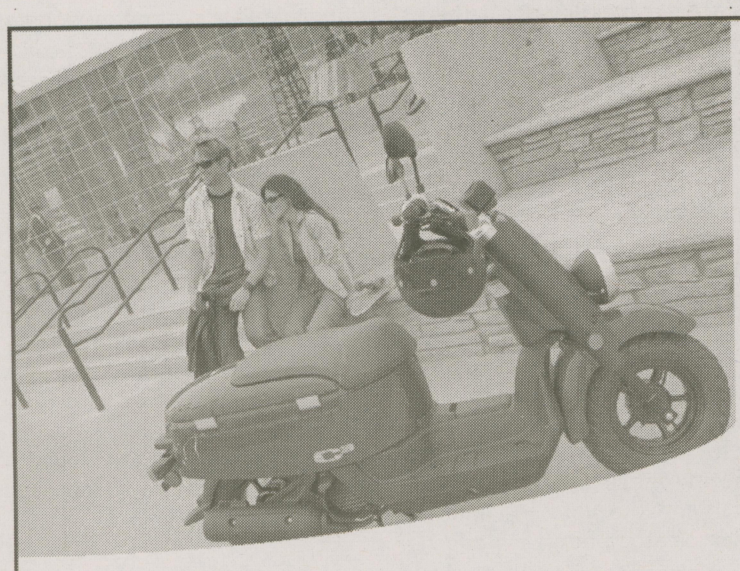
Goal! tells the story of Santiago Munez (Kuno Becker), an asthmatic Mexican gardener who is cutting lawns in L.A. one day and trying out for England's Newcastle United the next. Many overdone sports clichés and painful high-profile soccer cameos later, Munez is stepping up to take Newcastle's season-saving free kick.

Right.

The closest near-saintly Santiago gets to grit or scandal—both staples of English soccer—is having his picture taken with four ladies in underwear. Some scandal. A photo of a player snorting coke off a prostitute's chest: now that's a proper English indignity.

Those responsible for this flick should be extremely ashamed. And so should the folks that gave the go-ahead for *Goal! 2* and the upcoming *Goal! 3*. With so much confection, dentists have never had it so good.

- Wayne Potoroka



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Vikes lose battle to UBC but head to Canada West war

UVic basketball team won't rely on a wild card—they will play to win

by Andrew Kim and Eric Szeto, the *Ubyssey*
with files from David Karp and Boris Korby

VANCOUVER — UVic got swept by division rivals UBC in the best-of-three division finals, but is still headed to the Canada West Final Four on March 2 and 3 thanks to a wild card spot.

What was supposed to be a battle between two national title contenders turned out to be more like a basketball clinic Feb. 22 at UBC's War Memorial Gym as the UBC T-Birds led in almost every statistical category en route to a dominating 80-63 win in game one. And in a rare display, it wasn't UBC's ever-dangerous long-distance guards doing most of the scoring. T-Bird centre Bryson Kool led the way at both ends of the floor, scoring 22 points while grabbing 12 rebounds to pace.

The Thunderbirds displayed perhaps the best defensive effort of the season in the victory, limiting the Vikes to 27 per cent from the floor in the first half, effectively ending the contest before it was 20 minutes old. UBC's energetic man-to-man defence forced several key turnovers in the opening half, which the T-Birds were able to take advantage of as they doubled up on the Vikes 46-23 at the halfway point.

"I thought defensively we did some really good things, and Bryson Kool was dynamite for us," said UBC coach Kevin Hanson. "He had a great all-around game. He played great defence and he rebounded really well. He can be a load if he gets going and plays aggressive, and I thought without a doubt tonight was his best game as a Thunderbird."

Star fifth-year guard Casey Archibald led UBC's backcourt with 17 points, while Chris Dyck benefited from UBC's trademark high-post pick-and-roll play to chip in 13.

"We want everyone to contribute," said UBC's Jason Birring, who chipped in with 8 points off the bench. "It's great to have everyone involved, and we just love everyone playing well."

UVic coach Craig Beaucamp said his team simply didn't play well enough. "We just didn't come ready to compete at the level we needed to," he said.

Dyck three carries UBC

UBC guard Chris Dyck helped end UVic's playoff run with a three-pointer from mid-court in the first half of UBC's 88-82 game two win against UVic.

After recovering a Victoria tip that sent him back to his own half to chase down the ball, and with the crowd counting down the shot clock, Dyck ran back across mid-court to nail an incredible three, putting the Birds up 41-30 with minutes left in the whirlwind half.

He was nailing so many shots he could have scored while on the bench. "It was a fun half to play. We got a little lucky on that long ball," Dyck said of his 19 first half points—12 of which came from beyond the arc.

But while UBC came out blazing, holding leads of up to 12 points, they weren't able to put the game away.

Unfortunately for the Thunderbirds, Dyck started the second half with two quick fouls and was on the bench for almost the entire second half.

Then, to make matters worse, UBC's untimely offensive fouls and sloppy offensive execution helped the surging Vikes come within a point of taking the lead.

Beaucamp said he thought the refs should have called more charging fouls against UBC. "It's hard when the game's on the line and there's a couple tough ones that went against us."

UVic guard Brandon Ellis added, "There were some horseshit calls against us. But you're always going to be in games like that."

The T-Birds looked shaky at times, wobbling, stumbling and watching as UVic chipped away at their lead. But then something happened. Maybe it was the chants of "overrated" from the UVic faithful in attendance while Archibald took freethrows. Maybe it was because the Birds had faced this type of adversity before. Whatever it was, UBC managed to find that spark to stay afloat, answering every UVic surge with a solid defensive play or a timely basket.

"It basically came down to who made plays at the end of the game, who got loose balls, and we did that and that's why we won," said Archibald, who also finished with eight assists, none nicer than an alley-oop pass to an airborne Dyck in the first half.

It also took a well-balanced attack, with three T-Birds finishing in double digits. "That's what we need. That's what championship teams are all about," said Archibald. "Different guys step up at different games. It's matter of people getting into their groove, getting confidence."

Despite the near meltdown, UBC cemented their second straight Pacific Division title—their fourth in five years.

UVic's season is now on the line when they face the top-ranked Brandon Bobcats on March 2 at the Canada West Final Four tournament in Brandon. The Vikes lost to the Bobcats 82-81 in January.

"We have to focus on Friday. That's the season for us," said Beaucamp. "Our national championship starts Friday."

If the Vikes pull off the upset, they'll earn a spot in the national championships and will play for the Canada West title the following night against the winner of UBC versus Saskatchewan.

The top two teams in Canada West will head to the national championship in Halifax on March 16 and 18, with one wild card spot up for grabs.

But the Vikes aren't banking on the wild card spot. "I would have a tough time justifying that," said Beaucamp. "We gotta win. We gotta win.

KELLAN HIGGINS/THE UBYSSEY PHOTO

UVic's Steve Moore (right) goes up against T-Bird Jason Birring.

SPORTS OPINION

Superstar athletes deserve their huge salaries

by Gemma Karstens-Smith

PROVIDED IMAGE

Athletes earn their big contracts by braving the paparazzi and missing out on family life.

Are pro athletes worthy of their sky-high salaries?

In January, David Beckham signed a contract with the Los Angeles Galaxy that could net him up to $250 million US over five years. Is it outrageous that Beckham, who at 31 is a veritable senior citizen in the world of pro sports, earns that much money just for playing soccer? Maybe there's a quota of goals you have to score or medals you have to win before you deserve multi-million dollar contracts. Maybe multi-million dollar contracts shouldn't be allowed in professional sports at all.

Some people argue that professional athletes are undeserving of such salaries. They aren't saving lives or creating world peace—all they're doing is playing games.

What the critics are forgetting is that being a sports superstar isn't always an easy life. There's more to worry about than just endorsement deals and signing bonuses. It's not a career path known for longevity. A bad season or a scoring slump opens the possibility of being traded to another team. As athletes begin to age, their sport takes a serious toll on their body, and their value begins to decrease.

Then there's all the time they have to spend away from home, travelling between different cities or even different countries. Having crowds of thousands cheering your name night after night doesn't remove the entire sting of missing yet another birthday of a loved one.

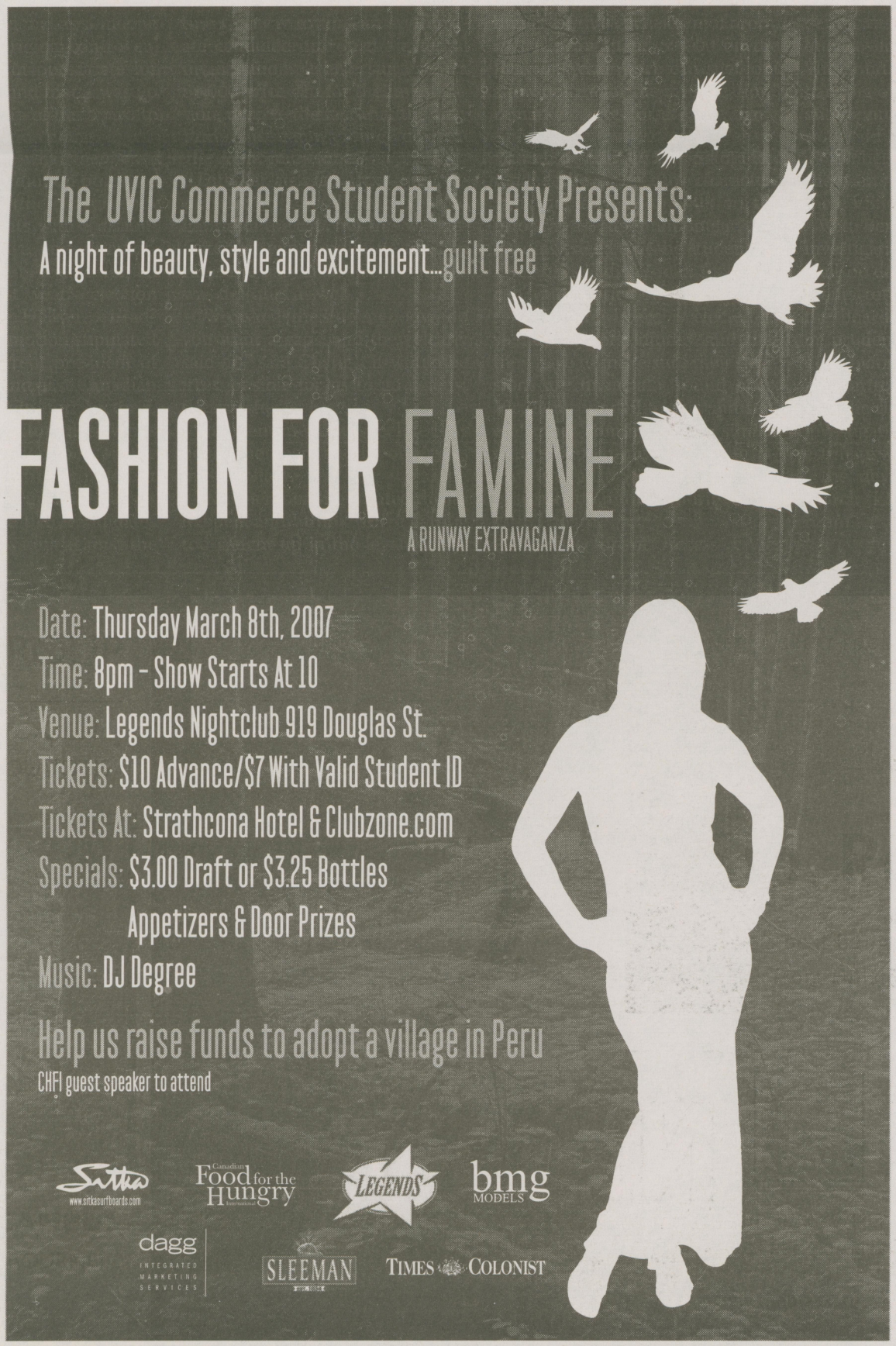
Some athletes are uncomfortable with the attention that celebrity brings; some complain about how they're portrayed in the media. These salaries reflect the price of privacy. Paparazzi pictures are inevitable, and their salaries help compensate athletes for the discomfort of that regrettable photo plastered all over the Internet.

Still, these seven-, eight-, nine-digit salaries are hurting pro sports. When small teams with less revenue can't afford to sign the big names associated with winning titles, they have to find other paths to a championship. When larger teams constantly demolish these smaller teams with brand-name players, fans tire of watching their hometown heroes lose, so they stop coming to games and stop supporting their team. The small team's revenue decreases until the franchise is sold to a town that can better support them.

Salary caps have been imposed in different areas of the athletic world amid a flurry of opinion. The Oilers' 2006 playoff run is an example of how the playing field can be levelled. The 2005-06 season was the year a salary cap was brought into the NHL. The end of the season saw the Oilers, a team that had previously possessed a relatively small budget, make it all the way to the Stanley Cup finals.

But critics of salary caps argue that teams with larger revenues should be able to spend their profits without league restrictions.

Perhaps the real problem lies with us, the public. Maybe our criticism of how much an athlete should earn is just plain jealousy.



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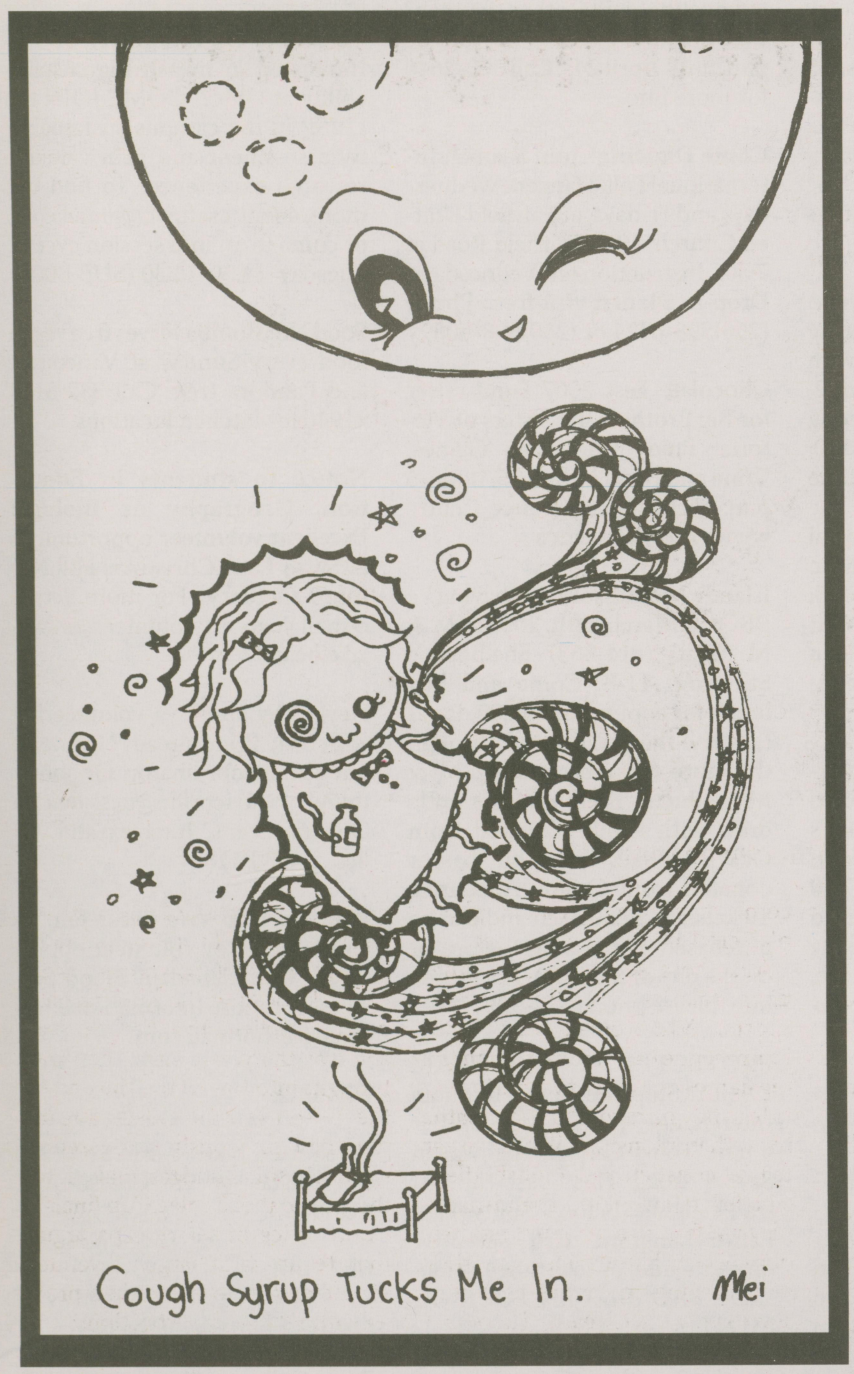

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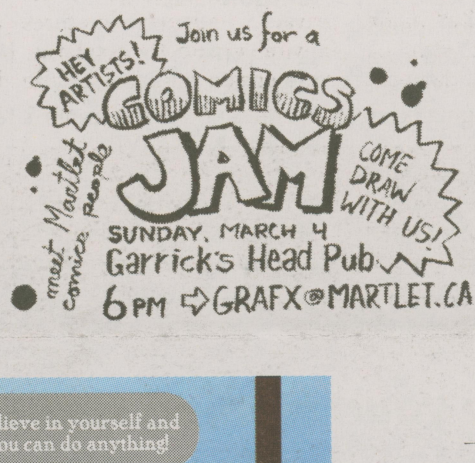
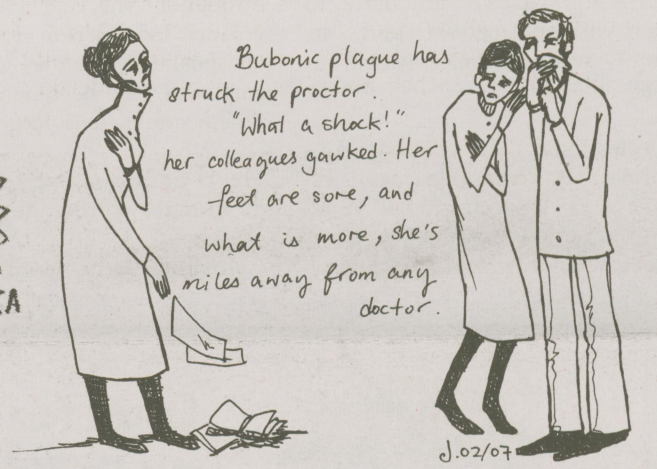
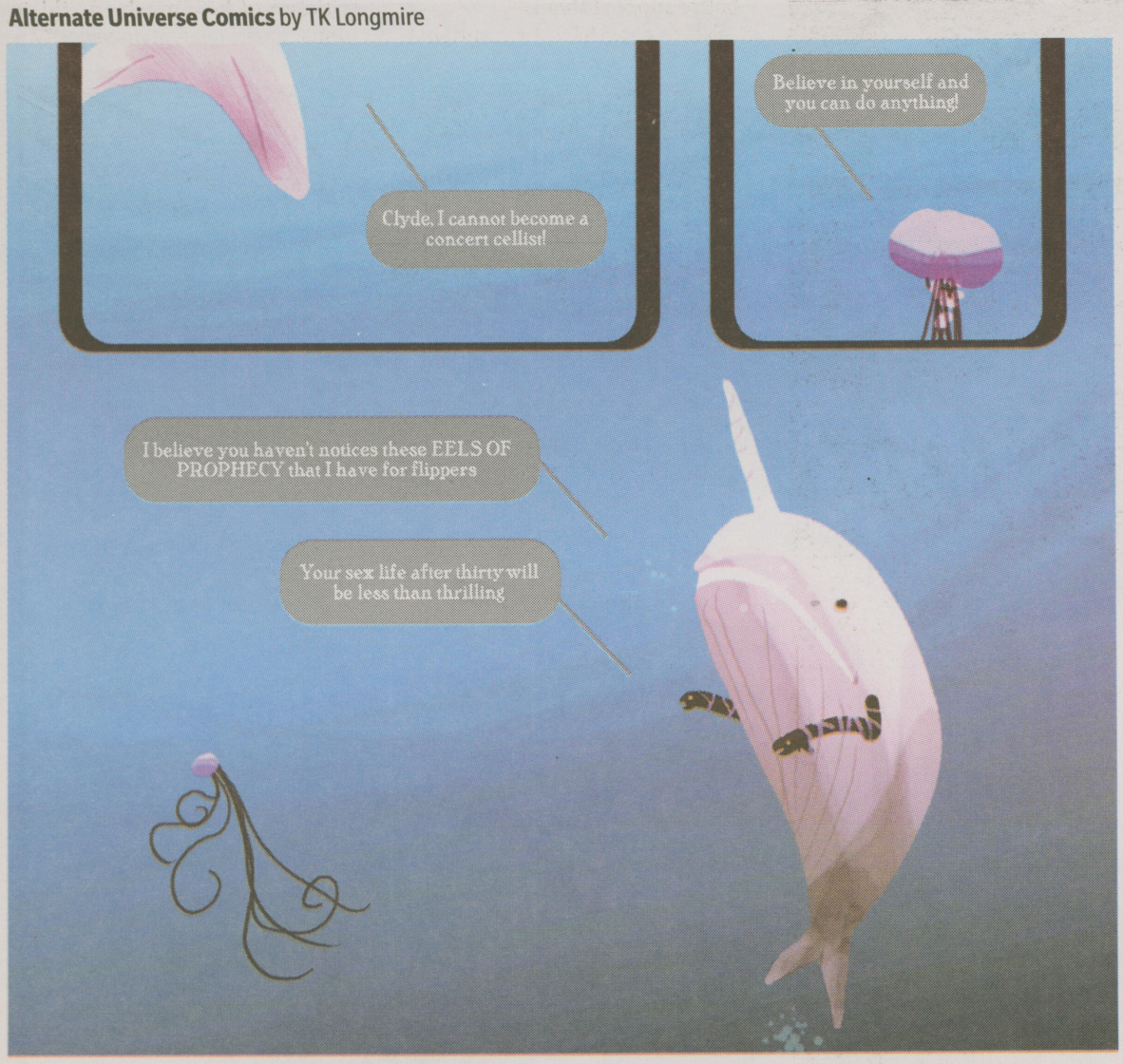




Alternate Universe Comics by TK Longmire



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Island Montessori is having a BBQ on March 24th, 2007 at M & M Meats (#14-3637 Shelbourne St.) from 11-3. Come and buy lunch for a minimum $2.00 donation and then take a look through the store for great tasting M & M products. There is also a raffle draw with a bike donated from Oak Bay Bikes and a gift basket donated from Calling All Cards. Tickets are $2.00 each and can be purchased at the store before or on the day of the BBQ. For more info. please phone 514-9391.

PROTECT GOLDSTREAM RALLY. Stop the Bear Mountain Interchange. Friday, Mar. 2nd @ 4 p.m. Trans-Canada Highway at Savory Road. (Just past the last traffic lights, before Goldstream Park). Langford. Call 388-3847 for more info, or to arrange a ride-share. BADMINTON TOURNAMENT

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Volunteer Opportunity!
Interested in measuring sustainability at UVic? COME JOIN the UVSP in the campus sustainability assessment and gain valuable research experience! To find out more, email csafuvic@gmail.com, or come to an info session every Tuesday 14:30-15:30 (SUB B007)

Food Not Bombs serves free vegan food every Sunday at Vancouver and Pandora tree. Call 383-5144 x1940 for kitchen locations.

Notice to students in Education, Geography or Biology: Excellent volunteer opportunities at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary. For more details e-mail Joan at: volunteer@swanlake.bc.ca

Hey! Why aren't ya volunteering with Uvic Pride already? Come be our social coordinator! Or something! uvicpride@uvss.uvic.ca Queers, Trans, Intersex and Allies... SUB B118

Want to help save lives? Join us and fulfill a key volunteer opportunity with Canadian Blood Services. For more information email cbsuvic@hotmail.com

FOR SALE

Lotsa used bikes 4 sale $100-250 ReCyclistas @ 25 Crease Ave. 418-8867.

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